The Secret Land of Freelance Journalism in Lithuania: a life-world study of professional challenges in the digital era

Agne Rasciute

9010030-287

Lund University

MSc in Media and Communication

Supervisor: Professor Mia-Marie Hammarlin

Examiner: Dr. Fredrik Miegel

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**Extinguish my eyes, I'll go on seeing you.*
Seal my ears, I'll go on hearing you.
And without feet I can make my way to you,
without a mouth I can swear your name.

Break off my arms, I'll take hold of you
with my heart as with a hand.
Stop my heart, and my brain will start to beat.
And if you consume my brain with fire,
I'll feel you burn in every drop of my blood.

*A poem by Rainer Maria Rilke that was read by one of the interviewees during the course of fieldwork expressing her love for journalism

Abstract

Journalism profession and journalists' practices are usually critiqued when a new shift happens. Currently, digitalization of the newsrooms, economic state of journalism and changing labour conditions have an impact on shaping the models according to which newsrooms work and journalists understand their professional roles and identities. The aforementioned changes within the profession are usually referred to as the 'journalism crisis'. Nonetheless, many journalism studies lack a broader and a more holistic picture of what aggregates the professional challenges for the journalists.

Employing the life-world concept, this thesis aim is to study the Lithuanian freelance journalists' everyday experiences. They are living and working in the time of ongoing changes within the profession and society. Freelance journalism as a practice in Lithuania is still developing, therefore it is a unique possibility to explore the phenomenon by seeing, hearing and understanding it through freelance journalists accounts. This would help to broaden the discussions of contemporary and unavoidable new roles, practices, and competencies.

The study draws on qualitative empirical research, based on 12 interviews with freelance journalists and two-week fieldwork. The analysis further sustains the already existing knowledge of how the separation of private (home) and public (work) spaces obscures, consequently, how the distinction between work and leisure time is blurring. On a more general level, the respondents' everyday life is shaped by the state of journalism in Lithuania, because every day they try to shore up perceived problems with their own contributions. Consequently, the newsroom, drawing on the interviewees' accounts, emerges as a symbol of the problems within journalism space as well as within the nation. Likewise, the study shows how the state of the profession in the country is influential for considering and experiencing the professional challenges. It is argued that to study journalism culture, researchers have to, with an open and unprejudiced mind, study journalism culture as a part of wider cultural aspects, such as a nation's history.

Key words: *Journalists; Journalism challenges; freelance journalism; freelance labour; life-world; everyday experiences; Lithuania*

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INTRODUCTION

If for a moment, one would imagine journalism as a space, it would be a green land with young and fresh grass; some small parts of it glitter from the dewdrops. However, if one stands on a hill it could be seen that explosions, someone's deep footsteps and trash left by the visitors, mark the field: digitalization of the newsrooms (Deuze, 2007; Hanitzsch, 2011; 2015); increased market orientation and implementation of business models that focuses on content quantity rather than quality (Schudson, 2016); active audiences that are enabled by the social media to question the integrity of media outlets and journalists professionalism in general (Carbasse, 2015; Lee, 2015); and changing nature of news writing (Zelizer, 2017). These aforementioned cultural, structural and organisational changes have an impact on shaping the models according to which newsrooms work and journalists understand their professional roles and identities.

Guessing the future of journalism (or the time of its death) became immensely popular when new media technologies reshaped the nature of journalistic work. Many studies document changes in and threats to traditional journalistic practices and roles, such as equanimity of the content and sourcing or editorial autonomy (Nygren, Dobek-Osrowska, 2015; Hanitzsch, 2015). In addition, the one-way authoritative relationship between journalists and the audience has changed and is now more interactive, engaging and at the same time more complicated (Zelizer, 2017). The clear distinction between professional journalists and other media workers is blurring too (Donsbach, 2012, p. 47). In some studies, the traditional journalistic practices and responsibilities such as impartiality, public accountability and being autonomous from any external and internal influences are documented as vanishing or as relics of the old era of journalism (Hanitzsch, 2015; Witschge, Nygren, 2009, p. 38). In the new era, journalism seems to operate on the slippery slopes that lie between advertising, disseminating homogeneous content and delivering analytical news. Academics and journalists themselves sometimes call it the 'crisis' of the profession.

Paradoxically, technological developments, such as the internet and the possibility to work from almost anywhere to some extent enable journalists to remain in the profession, avoiding being part of the aforementioned changes in the newsrooms, by, for instance, choosing the freelance type of work (Phillips, 2015, p. 70). In this case, freelance journalists are no longer only in the journalism space, they also enter into the freelance one, with its own laws and rules. Thus, freelance journalists have a distinctive possibility to observe the professional crisis from outside of the newsrooms and bring a different perspective to the ongoing discussion of journalism work and its challenges.

Usually, newsroom or cultural journalism studies' samples consist of journalists employed in the newsrooms. Sometimes the sample is coupled with freelance journalists' accounts. Regardless, the studies still provide knowledge of difficulties freelancers are facing and tactics they are creating. What the studies lack is the deeper look at the context of journalists' everyday life. Journalism is ultimately a "production of human beings" (McNair, 2005, p. 27) and this should be reckoned in while studying the state of the profession. Rather small amounts of studies touch upon the broader contexts that the analysis of the everyday experiences could illuminate. For instance, what are the motives for choosing the freelance form of work? Is it a way to leave the newsroom space or actually to stay in it? What is it like to be a freelance journalist today at the time of ongoing shifts within the profession? Philosopher and social phenomenologist Alfred Schutz (1974) concept of the life-world lends itself to study the experiences, including dreams, fears and all the possible *happenings* that constitute the everyday life. Freelancing is part of journalistic labour, many influential journalists started off their careers as freelancers or interns. Nowadays it is an ambition as well as a way to support oneself through difficult circumstances in the time of job cuts and growing unemployment rates (Taylor, 2015, p. 175). For many young people, sometimes, freelance becomes the one and only career path that rarely leads to a full-employment (Alderman, 2017). It is time to rethink the current paradigm and view digital and freelance labour as part of journalism space, not as the destruction or a causality of the crisis.

In the last decade, the number of freelance journalists has constantly been increasing (Solomon, 2016, p. 241; Eurofond, 2015). Nonetheless, academic attention usually is turned to the prestigious news outlets, newsrooms and their journalists in the Western world. This hinders the possibilities to get different vantage points of the problems within the profession (Zelizer, 2017, p. 30). Hence, societies of Central and Eastern Europe are transitional and "could be perceived as symbolic social laboratories where all the controversies and contemporary challenges of modern life can be tested" (Balčytienė, 2013, p. 29). Some cross-national projects try to illuminate and compare journalistic practices in various countries (for example the World of Journalism Project 2011-2016). Nonetheless, for a long time neither the journalism workforce nor the freelance type of work in Lithuania has been studied. In Lithuania, using the metaphor from one of the interviewed freelance journalists, "freelance is a secret land". The prevalence of freelance labour is smaller than in other European countries (OECD, 2015; Eurofond, 2015), still, the land exists and it is time to remove the veil that keeps it secret.

This thesis seeks to broaden the discussion of contemporary and unavoidable new roles, practices, and competencies by investigating the life-world of freelance journalists, who live and work in the time of ongoing shifts within the profession and society. Sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1998) notices the growing gap between what is required from journalists in the newsrooms and media organisations and what kind of values and requirements they expect to pursue in their work. This results in anger, anxiety and early individual crisis amongst journalists (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 38). By interviewing Lithuanian freelance journalists and paying attention to their life-world, it is possible to bring a more holistic and different perspective to the global discussion about what constitutes and influences the individual and professional 'crisis'.

Aims and research questions

The thesis addresses the lack of a more holistic approach to freelance journalistic work outside the newsrooms. Moving beyond the mere analysis of precariousness and temporality of freelance journalism, the overall aim of this thesis is to study the life-world of freelance journalists in Lithuania. It is rather difficult nowadays to limit research frames to a specific country (Wake, 2016, p. 52). Still, in experiencing the life-world, culture, economic and political contexts as well as the society within the country are immensely influential (Schutz, 1974, pp. 95; 98). Freelance journalism as a practice in Lithuania is still developing, it is happening now, therefore it is a unique possibility to explore the phenomenon by seeing, hearing and understanding it through freelance journalists accounts.

The thesis study questions are:

1. How do freelance journalists in Lithuania feel about their work?
2. What do the everyday experiences of freelance journalists reveal about journalists work conditions in Lithuania?
3. How do the everyday experiences of freelance journalists intertwine with the state of journalism in the country, on a more general level?

Positioning

Barbie Zelizer (2008), who is studying the journalism culture, has distinguished five perspectives to approaching journalism: as a profession; as an institution in the society; as people; as a set of practices and analysis of journalistic content (text). This thesis covers at least two of the approaches: journalism as people and a set of practices in relation to freelancing. In its focus on working conditions and the everyday life, this study adds to the bodies of work on cultural studies of journalism, newsroom studies and labour studies.

Thesis outline

This outline is a short guide to the structure of the thesis for the reader.

In the first part, through analysing the literature, surrounding freelance work conditions and journalism professional crisis, I also discern research gaps that I will try to fill in with my contribution. Consequently, in the second part, I introduce the theoretical framework that will help to provide a more holistic approach to studying the everyday experiences of freelance journalists in Lithuania.

In the third part, I introduce the research design in more detail. I use qualitative interviews with 12 freelance journalists (part and full-time) working in Lithuania, the empirical data is also enriched with 2 weeks of fieldwork spending time at the interviewees' homes or other places where they usually work, such as cafés. I also offer a discussion about the limits of conducted fieldwork suggesting viewing it as a way of being with the environment and people.

The analysis starts in the fourth part. The poetic aspect to phenomenology that French philosopher Gaston Bachelard introduces in his book "The Poetics of Space" (1964) inspires me. The freelance journalists' life-world experiences of working as freelancers in the shifting profession in Lithuania runs, as the main theme, through three analysis chapters. The study unpacks the national and professional challenges within the journalism space. Consequently, blurring distinctions between spaces of home and work, work time and leisure time. The analysis and the thesis end with concluding reflections

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THE LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. Liquid definitions

The typologies of freelance work are emerging differently in different theoretical strands. In labour terms, freelancers can be named as contract workers (Paulussen, 2012), self-employed (Gandini, 2016), working for themselves (Cohen, 2015a), portfolio workers (Gill, 2002) or someone who does not work according to the traditional and institutional timing (Edstrom, Ladendorf, 2012). There are freelance journalists who own their own news media or publishing businesses or, in other words, they are entrepreneurial (Horowitz, Rosati, 2014). Even though some scholars put entrepreneurship under the same umbrella of freelance work, others highlight some existing differences. For instance, freelancers do not possess as much of independence as entrepreneurs, because the latter have their own platforms to publish their works in. Whereas freelance journalists are dependent on a third party, be it the news media or an editor (Carbasse, 2015, p. 264). Likewise, the entrepreneurial work might be viewed as a type of freelance work, but should not be used interchangeably. It might pose a threat to excluding discussion of power relations and thresholds freelance journalists have to permeate through in order to produce and publish their texts.

The conditions of labour correlate with the conditions of journalism as a profession and the newsroom as an institution, it becomes commoditised and employed for the profit making (Cohen, 2015a, p. 100). The changes in the definitions of the freelance work might symbolise how the journalism profession is dealing with the upcoming challenges. To some extent, the individual freelancer becomes an asset that is valued and priced (Gandini, 2016, pp. 125, 136; Hearn, 2011). Media and journalism scholars Mark Deuze and Tamara Witschge (2017) summarizes the whole point of freelance journalists' work in the current labour market in the digital era: "the atypically employed individual finding his or her permanence in impermanence, forever flexibilized on the outside *as well as* on the inside of news institutions" (p. 8). As the literature indicates, the typologies of the freelance work define journalists' relationships with the news media organisation, editors and colleagues. In some studies, the definition 'freelance' is used as encompassing everything that this occupation is, however, different typologies shine a light on different everyday experiences. This brings into a discussion another way of understanding freelance work, as the

definition of an occupation or work relation status and as a part of the private life. The latter understanding also will guide this study.

1.2. Additional labour

In the public discourse freelancers are portrayed as "ideal neoliberal workers" (Cohen, 2015a, p. 518): clay that adapts to market demands, usually equipped with the newest skills, who maybe even come with an already established circle of the audience and a brand-name. The growth of freelance labour, especially during the two past decades, causes precariousness and depreciation of the workforce (Baines, 2002; Conor, Gill, Taylor, 2015, p. 9). Academics George Morgan and Pariece Nelligan (2015, p. 68) adapts the term 'labile labour' for emphasising the fluid and blurry requirements and a number of different kinds of symbolic and knowledge work the freelancers are expected to do.

Many freelance journalists in various countries do not count as an equal part of the profession (EFJ, 2015). Therefore, they do not have the same professional entitlements as employed journalists. For instance, many freelancers do not have press cards, IDs, or an equal right to protection during trials (EFJ, 2015). Consequently, it is more difficult to get into the workshops and conferences that might require proof of working in a specific news media organisation (Patrick, Elks, 2015, p. 62). Freelance journalists usually are collaborating with more than one media organisation. This means constant adaptation to the new value and work systems and, consequently, maintaining positive relationships with editors who do not necessarily respond in the same way (Patrick, Elks, 2015, p. 62). Some studies (Paulussen, 2012, p. 200; Das, 2007; Solomon, 2016) indicate the apparent unequal division of labour between freelance and full-time journalists, especially during the evenings and holidays. This usually only comes into the light comparing freelance and full-time newsroom journalists' work practices. Still, the discussions lack a deeper look into the unequal labour conditions and power dynamics between salaried and freelance journalists in and outside the newsrooms.

Freelance journalists are adapting to the market demands and following the existing non-written freelance rules. Notwithstanding, they have agency in negotiating salaries, terms and deadlines (Cohen, 2012, p. 15). The levels of the agency are tied to the symbolic power of freelance journalists (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 41). Either, they are seen as successful and professional thus can

demand and negotiate, or less successful and acknowledged, thus have to adapt (Storey, et al., 2005, p. 1038). The conscious decisions and motives are important details for studying the freelance work. For now, the majority of studies, while focusing on a specific aspect, overstep it. Delving into more personal and subjective motives alongside with reasons for those decisions, could enrich the discussions of freelance journalism practices and work conditions. This means, looking broader and moving away from focusing on the economic determinism and precariousness as the most influential aspects of the freelance work.

1.3. Blurring distinctions of private and public

Due to precarious and temporal conditions that usually are part of the freelance occupation, question freelancers might ask themselves is either how to reach the full-employment or how to freelance and continue doing it. One of the tactics is to create a sense of difference, newness, something that would substitute this inequality, hence brand the 'self' (Gandini, 2016; Hearn, 2011). This relationship mimics the power struggle between media outlets (Carbasse, 2015, p. 262). However, in this case, the individuals, not the newspapers, are rivalling with each other to be consumed, not by the readers, but by the editors and media organisations. Paradoxically, constantly working to get more work, some freelancers find it difficult to stop thinking about it.

The studies of self-enterprising of freelance journalists indicate that establishing your own brand and positioning yourself as a valuable asset to the media organisation to some extent is an act of self-mediating (Cohen, 2015; Kuehn, Corrigan, 2013). In order to catch the attention and acknowledgement of the future clients, the freelancer is constantly on display on social media platforms. This activity can be both the additional form to the 24-hour labour and as a tactic of creating what the sociologist Erving Goffman (1959), would term the 'front self'. "That part of the individual's performance which regularly functions in a general and fixed fashion to define the situation for those who observe the performance" (p. 32), thus, the freelancers portray a specific image for 'others'. Consequently, the successful freelancers are the ones who adapt to the market appeals and position themselves as employable by creating an online persona. The latter can be a celebrity journalist or a specialist in a particular area. This 'front self' helps freelancers to keep working and be printed, be valued and earn more money (Storey, et al., 2005, p. 1041). However, there are some drawbacks to it. Sociologist Melissa Gregg (2011, pp. 99-100) in a thought-provoking way emphasises that creating and maintaining a specific image in online platforms poses

a threat of losing the 'back self'. As a result, the offline, private and personal identity is less and less on display during the everyday routines. This also blurs the distinction between the private and the public self. In addition, understanding the self as an enterprise makes freelancer feel fully responsible for both the failures and the success (Storey, et al., 2005, pp. 1040; 1043). The freelancers, believing that they and their work are the same, experience the rejection from the editors more personally.

Many freelance workers are working from home. Sociologist Susan Baines (2002) calls it home based micro-enterprises. Consequently, the dispersed work environment intersects with other areas of life and the distinction between work and domestic or home spaces blurs (Hochschild, 1997, p. 14; Taylor, 2015, p. 117). Additionally, a non-working space is not necessarily the intimate domestic home space. It can be what urban sociologist Ray Oldenburg (1999), calls the 'third places', the public places that come after home and workplace. After studying people working on a freelance basis and those who choose or have to work from home Gregg (2011) states, that "work has broken out of the office, downstairs to the café into the street, on the train, and later still to the living room, dining room, and bedroom" (p. 1). Especially in the rise of internet technologies and social media platforms, work and home can be connected regardless specific time and/or place (Gregg, 2011, p. 53). It consequently affects the quality of work and domestic life. Studies indicate that it becomes more difficult for some freelancers to separate or, better put, clearly separate the work and non-work spaces, where one ends and the other starts. The confusion grows, even more, when some freelance workers create work environments at home (Gregg, 2011, p. 53; Baines, 2002, p. 98). In addition, sociologist Arlie Russell Hochschild (1997, p. 45) states that the distinction between the time people spend at home and time they spend at work is obscure, she calls it the 'time bind'. This illuminates the blurring distinction between work and home spaces, and the growing intent to employ public and private spheres for work.

1.4. Journalism crisis

1.4.1. Traditional journalistic roles and practices

Regardless the pathway of address the researcher chooses in studying journalism, the traditional journalistic responsibilities, roles and practices usually serve as the starting point for the analysis. After studying journalists work in the newsrooms, and extensive analysis of the available literature

on traditional journalistic practices, Deuze (2007, p. 163) summarises the homogeneous fundamentals of journalism: public accountability; objectivity[1]; editorial and personal autonomy; immediacy; professional ethics and editorial codes of conduct. These notions encompass responsibilities and roles of holding the ones in power accountable, sometimes it might be referred to as 'gatekeeping' or 'watchdogs'; educating the audience, hence being professionals who seek to implement the development of the society; giving voice to people who need one; revealing the stories that might have been kept in secret. Likewise being at the centre of the events, portraying both sides of the story and questioning everything that is on the display. In addition, political neutrality and autonomy from any possible external and internal influences should be at the core of every journalistic work. According to journalism scholar David H. Weaver (2005, p. 44), these are the rudiments which are resistant to time, language, history and ethnicity. The aforementioned roles, according to journalists themselves, are the practices that define professional journalistic work and separate real journalists from other kinds of media workers, citizen journalists and pundits (Deuze, 2007, p. 141; 168; Singer, 2011, pp. 81-2). This also could be viewed as the journalistic doxa, ''practical schemes – implicit, tacit, very hard to make explicit, in other words, the universe of the tacit presuppositions that we accept as the natives of a certain society'' (Bourdieu, 2005, p. 37). Journalists accept these traditional roles and practices, which constitute the journalistic doxa, without much of questioning (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 83; Schultz, 2007, p. 194). In addition, journalists construct their professional identities accordingly to traditional, and core elements of the profession.

Practices and routines performed in specific media organisations shape the specific traits of journalistic identity too. For example, in entertainment news media, understanding of the traditional routines might be different from that in the news (Wiik, 2014, p. 660-1). Additionally country-specific aspects also, to some extent, shape the professional identities of journalists (Wake, 2016, p. 52). For instance, in more politically controlled countries, the journalist would be complacent, in liberal democratic countries – would act as an opposition to the establishment (for a broader discussion see Hallin, Mancini, 2014).

[1] However in some newsroom studies, objectivity "has been dismissed not only as an unattainable standard but also as an undesirable norm" (Boudana, 2011, p. 385).

1.4.2. Professional and individual crisis

Cultural, structural and organisational changes have an impact on shaping the models according to which newsrooms work and journalists understand their professional roles and identities. Media scholars Slavko Splichal and Peter Dahlgren (2016) shortly call these circumstances the "creative destruction of journalism" (p. 9). In accord with the professional crisis, journalists are experiencing individual crisis, when it becomes more difficult to define what a professional journalist is, what the journalistic roles in the contemporary societies are and what kind of relationships there should be with the audiences.

Freelance journalists, as all other journalists, are part of the journalism space. Sometimes freelancing for a journalist can be a way to secure traditional journalistic ideals in the time of professional crisis (Shudson, 2016; Landerdof, 2012, pp. 96-7). Although, working on a freelance basis sometimes complicates journalists' professional identity. For instance, one of the core traditional responsibilities for journalists is to provide the news without regard to the agenda of any institution or a person (Koch, Obermaier, 2014). This becomes an issue for freelancers who work both part-time in journalism and public relations, some scholars refer to them as 'the moonlighters' (Fröhlich; Koch, Obermaier, 2013). For these freelancers', studies indicate, that, working in two different employments might result in experiencing inter-role conflicts (Obermaier, Koch, 2015, p. 618). In addition, the experiences of journalists', who only freelance as journalists, vary. Holly Patrick and Kate Elks (2015) research imply that freelancers who try to follow the traditional journalistic roles such as educating the reader, providing objective and in-depth analysis, consider freelancing as a less favourable form of work (p. 61). Opposing, if freelancers are concerned more about being published and getting the 'readership' then the conditions of work are more of a secondary facet (Patrick, Elks, 2015, p. 61).

Some journalists state that freelance is one of the means to have full journalistic independence (Edstrom, Ladendorf, 2012). However, the latter might come with a certain cost. For instance, when collaborating with newsrooms, freelance journalists have to work according to institutional requirements within the newsroom (Cohen, 2012, p. 148; Das, 2007, p. 142). Therefore, the experience of being independent from the editorial control, due to unstable freelance work conditions, might be more perceived than actual (Gollmitzer, 2016, p. 833). In addition, freelancers' individual capacities cannot outweigh the power and security that comes together with employment in a newsroom or news media organisation. This becomes even more prominent in the need of

protection or support (Nygren, Dobek-Ostrowska, Maria 2015, p. 93). On the one hand, endeavour to be autonomous from any news media institution is a positive and professional act. On the other hand, studies indicate that journalism is a space where contacts, community and 'belonging' are important resources for the successful freelancing and the sustainment of a journalistic identity.

According to Bauman (2000), in the late liquid modernity, there are many resources for the people to create desirable professional and individual selves. Especially, when the frames of what constitutes which identities, are fluid and blurring. However, freedom and unclearness also "has a bitter after-taste" (p. 62). The state of unfinished self is vulnerable and causes anxiety and fears. Traditional journalistic roles to some extent are the stable resources for creating and maintaining the journalistic identity. Nonetheless, in the current crisis within the profession, the boundaries between the journalistic and other kinds of media work are blurring. Journalistic practices move away from what once was seen as traditional professional routines (Deuze, Witschge, 2017; Donsbach, 2012). Thus, all the previous journalistic ideals and norms that served as the guidelines for the journalists' professional identity creation seem now to be critiqued and questioned.

1.5. Research gaps

Knowledge about the current crisis in the profession derives from studying the multiple shifts in the traditional journalistic practices and roles. Some scholars view changes in certain practices such as the relationship with audiences or multi-tasking as part of the development of the profession (Deuze, Witschge, 2017). Zelizer (in Becker, 2016) assuredly states, the "changes it [new media technologies] introduces are changes of degree, not kind" (p. 4), thus appropriation of new media technologies and changes in some journalistic practices are just one part of the complex progress of the journalism profession and media industry as a whole.

It is rather difficult to avoid comparing experiences and work conditions of freelance and salaried journalists, because their work practices are similar and, ideally, they are following the same traditional roles and values. Deuze (2008, p. 14) argues that the journalism culture is becoming more open and hospitable to freelancers. Notwithstanding, the freelance journalists' experiences depend on much more layers than just having a possibility to enter, remain in, or leave the professional journalism space. The studies identify many challenges that prevail. Scholars still tend to study newsroom journalists, circumventing the conditions of the same work in different types of

employment. Looking from the broader perspective, this also can signal inequity when the people working in the newsrooms are the main sources who shape the knowledge about journalism work practices, routines, and work conditions. By comparing the experiences of salaried and freelance journalists, focusing on specific aspects, such as the amount of additional labour or precariousness working on a freelance basis, researchers rather map and document differences, but do not go beyond conventional considerations.

Journalism space is moving further from what was once perceived as traditional journalism. Correspondingly, newsroom journalists cannot longer be the ones who shape the knowledge about journalism and journalistic practices. In the light of massive layoffs of professional journalists, growing distrust and diminishing integrity of the profession, it is important to encompass all of what is journalism and journalists. Many studies provide with knowledge about precariousness, blurring distinctions between professional and non-professional journalists as well as between spaces of home and work, between private and public self. Nevertheless, studying only one aspect of the life-world of journalists – working in a newsroom – renders the experiences as too homogenous and excludes other critical elements. They still lack a more holistic approach, hence the analysis of the life-world outside the newsrooms.

2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Within the phenomenological approach, the life-world opens up as poetic and creative, ambiguous and dual. At the heart of the life-world concept are the direct and indirect experiences of the everyday life. A phenomenological approach to journalists' everyday life is an unconventional type of research in the newsroom studies. The latter often lack a broader look at what happens when the newsroom doors are closed.

Theories that lend themselves to phenomenology are concerned with the environment people live in and how they make sense of it. In short, it "is a theory that concentrates on how experiences are set out in action" (Frykman, Gilje, 2003, p. 15). By applying the life-world concept, it becomes possible to try to investigate the freelance journalists' everyday experiences in a more holistic manner. Thus, objects, details, hence everything that shape the hues of the everyday life, which might otherwise seem banal or trivial, are taken into account. Existentialist philosopher and sociologist Henri Lefebvre[2] is interested in the dialectical nature of the everyday life. He states that by studying the everyday experiences, it is possible to see "something else *which is there* in everyday objects, not an abstract lining but something enfolded within which hitherto we have been unable to see" (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 134). The philosopher and social phenomenologist Alfred Schutz (1974) concept of the life-world helps to unpack how freelance journalists use and make sense of the ordinary routines, interactions, feelings, in short, all that constitute their everyday life.

[2] Henri Lefebvre (1901-1991) was a French, Neo-Marxist existentialist philosopher and sociologist. He was immensely critical of Stalinism, structuralism and Marxist materialism (Hubbard, Kitchin, 2011). One of his most influential works is the "Critique of everyday life" (1991), there he illuminates the dialectic essence of the everyday life, where a person is both in control and not in control of the *happenings* in his life. An influential contribution to the phenomenology of space is his book "The Production of Space" (1991a). It introduces a notion of a space "as socially produced" (1991a, p. 26.), hence not static, constantly shifting. His studies help to unpack the parts of the everyday life that also shape the nature of the social space. Consequently, social space to some extent influences the human experiences of the everyday and vice versa.

2.1. The life-world

Schutz[3] (1974) defines the life-world as:

> The everyday life-world is the region of reality in which man can engage himself and which he can change while he operates in it by mean of his animate organism. At the same time, the objectivities and events, which are already found in this realm, limit his free possibilities of action (p.3).

The life-world is open and close, separating and combining, it comes in the light through engaging with the 'provinces'. The latter are physical and metaphysical, encompassing direct and indirect experiences or dreams, fears and the plans for the future. According to Schutz (1974, pp. 18-19), there are two social realities within the life-world: one that is already directly experienced and another that is yet to be experienced. Everyone makes sense of the life-world continuously through the actions and interactions. The life-world is "the world of our common experience" (Schutz, 1974, p. 68), additionally the 'fellow-men', contemporaries, successors and predecessors reciprocally influence each other's everyday experiences. Thus, people interact with the life-world both personally and by seeing how others act in it, what they can learn from the predecessors and leave for the successors.

Likewise, the 'stocks of knowledge' shape the direct and indirect experiences in the life-world. In short, knowledge is stacked through mistakes and lessons, but also through learning from already existing knowledge, such as culture, habituated social roles, myths and so on (Schutz, 1974, pp. 66-68; Berger, Luckman, 1967, p. 183). Two interactions are very important in shaping the 'stocks of knowledge' and hence experiencing the life-world. These are with the 'fellow-men' and an 'other'. With the fellow men, experiences are unitary and the 'stock of knowledge' is ensured and sustained. However, in a relation with the 'other', the 'stock of knowledge' might be challenged and changed (Schutz, 1974, p. 66). Similarly, sociologist George Herbert Mead (1934) writes about the importance of the 'other' in the process of forming and understanding the 'self'. The 'other' is not necessarily a close member of the same community, it is everyone with whom the person shares his

[3] Alfred Schutz (1889-1959) was an Austrian philosopher and social phenomenologist. His key works are "Phenomenology of the Social World" (1967) and "The Structures of the Life-World" (1974). The latter was published posthumously. In this study, I use the book where Schutz texts are co-authored with Thomas Luckmann. The theory of the life world usually is referred to as "the phenomenology of a natural attitude" (Barber, 2004), it unpacks the complexities of the everyday life, taking into account things that might seem banal, trivial or taken for granted. It is a holistic theory to the complex and multilayer 'happenings' that we call life.

'self' and whose approval he wants and seeks, Mead (1934, p. 158) calls it the 'generalised other'. The latter can be felt directly during the communication process with acquaintances, or it can be felt indirectly through a person's belief of what the 'other' is thinking and seeing of him (Mead, 1934, pp. 156-9). Consequently, in the relation with the 'other', a person learns what kind of roles and traits society appreciates and accepts.

The life-world concept renders the everyday actions holistically, taking into account direct and indirect experiences of the everyday life; additionally, influences of other people with whom the life-world is shared. It also acknowledges the dreams, plans for the future or nightmares, as indicators of important facets of the life-world.

2.2. Space metaphors

French philosopher Gaston Bachelard approaches phenomenology creatively. His works are open to methodological variations (Vydra, 2014, p. 46), for instance, in his influential book "Poetics of space" (1964) he reckons the house as a 'psychic state' (p. 72) from where all the other parts of 'being' come into the light. By studying poems, dreams and using the psychoanalysis of the imagination, Bachelard (1964) makes a study of experiencing the 'being' (p. 213). Applying metaphors of the house and everything that can be found within it, for instance, the nook, cellar, attic or drawers, he dissects feelings of 'being' for the reader without exposing, diminishing or doing a disservice to it. I am very much inspired by Bachelard's way to phenomenology. As the reader will later on see, his metaphors in many ways influenced not only the analysis, but also the outline of the thesis.

In this study, space is in line with Lefebvre's (1991a) notion of socially produced space. It is "'made up' through a three-way dialectic between perceived, conceived and lived space" (Hubbard, Kitchin, 2011, p. 6). The social space is not static; it is 'hypercomplex', encompassing geographical, social, physical as well as metaphysical, private and public entities (Lefebvre, 1991a, pp. 33; 88-9). Thus, it is shifting product of society and individuals. For holistically thinking about the scope of everything of what and where the life-world can be, spatial metaphors help. Lefebvre's notion of space lends itself to this study because it helps to understand how freelance journalists create the journalism space and at the same time experience it through interacting with it. It is rather

difficult to study and portray on the paper everything that space is or can be (Lefebvre, 1991a, p. 110). Applying metaphors and emphasising specific elements within the space enables one to observe the processes contributing to the direct and indirect experiences of the life-world.

2.3. Lithuanian context

The Lithuanian national context is important for the analysis because it shapes the freelance journalists' experiences of work and the journalism space. Lithuania is independent for 26 years now hence media freedom is young. Even though it is difficult to dissect the country-dependent journalistic practices, studies indicate that journalistic values and ethical codes of conduct are similar to those that constitute a hegemonic journalistic tradition around the world (Balčytienė, 2006, pp. 169-70). However, the latter are still altered by historical and cultural circumstances (Zelizer, 2008), especially the fifty years period of the communist regime.

The goal of the communist regime was to undermine national identity by rendering all the people as equal members of the Soviet nation. Media, which was the part of state apparatus, transmitted the depiction of a 'normal' everyday life in Soviet Lithuania (Putinaitė, 2008, pp. 265; 274). This directly influenced the appropriated professional roles and practices (Metykova, Cisarova, 2009, p. 733). After the Soviet Union collapsed, the journalism profession shifted from being part of the state apparatus to being free and liberal. Firstly, the responsibilities of cultivating and sustaining the national identity were prioritised (Balčytienė, 2012, pp. 57; 61). Correspondingly, journalists also had to re-adapt to being independent and acquire the roles and responsibilities journalists should possess in a democratic society (Balčytienė, 2006; 2012). Gaps in knowledge, weak journalistic tradition conditioned the acquisition of Western journalistic standard practices and values (Balaban, Meyan, 2012, p. 88; Balčytienė, 2012). The latter action also contributed to the homogenous and entertainment focused content in the majority of the news media. Overall, the environment that hindered free speech and the possibility to be an opposition to the government resulted in the weak professionalism of journalists and a weak publics' knowledge of journalists' work.

Currently, as in many European countries, digitalization of the newsrooms, growing commercialization, implementation of business model shape journalism in Lithuania today. Still,

there is a lack of empirical studies of how the journalism practices and profession look like in the 21st century. It needs to be observed and knowledge about it updated.

2.4. The freelance labour in Lithuania

The legislative environment for freelance labour is similar to other countries. The freelance work defines every work done independently by an individual from an organisation or institution (translated from Republic of Lithuania Information Law, 2006). Other definitions include agreements to sell a certain piece of work or the intellectual rights to it. Freelancers have to pay social security money by themselves and are not eligible for any holidays or other kinds of social benefits. Currently, the new labour law project is being discussed. It now involves some social benefits for freelance workers. However, analysts condemn that the new Labour Code "will further weaken labour protections and labour rights", which will consequently increase precariousness (Juska, Woolfson, 2017, pp. 133-4). In addition, there are no legislative guidelines for the editors and news media organisations how to communicate and keep contact with freelancers. For now, pay rates, what sums are below the certain line and what kind of treatment counts as illicit are liquid.

On the larger scale, permanent jobs in news media are scarce, especially in the sub-fields of cultural journalism, travel journalism or magazines (Jastramskis, 2014, p. 120). Whereas, the sociocultural signs indicate that freelance labour is slowly starting to grow and settle in Lithuania, for instance, the growing activity of freelance groups on social media and spaces of co-working hubs for freelance workers.

3

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. The methods

3.1.1. Qualitative interviews

The aim of this thesis is to pay close attention to the details of the life-world of freelance journalists in Lithuania. Media scholar Coleman (2013) advocates for stopping theorising and talking for the people, the researcher's duty is to listen to the life stories people are sharing. Freelance journalists' accounts in the academic discourse are scarce; the qualitative interview method is the best way to capture their stories (Jensen, Jankowski, 2002, p. 6).

The critics of the qualitative interview method question the ability to deliver objective knowledge when during interviews people with either intent or unconsciously might re-brush their stories (Berg, 2007). A flexible approach to the interview reduces this complexity (Seale, 2012, pp. 209, 202). This means taking into account what was presented during the interview as true claims of events experienced by the interviewees. Overall, both the respondents and I are delivering the knowledge, through the dialogue (Edwards, Holland, 2013, p. 17).

I interviewed people who work as freelance journalists. Due to the limited number of full-time freelance journalists, (it was possible to find just four who were full-time freelance journalists) I decided to include the part-timers or the ones who are just starting to work as freelance journalists. In the end, this enriched the data with more various experiences and diverse details.

The purposive search of the possible interviewees began in early January 2017. I used my personal contacts, participated in the specific freelance forums and used the snowballing technique to find the interviewees. With doing face-to-face interviews, I had the possibility to talk and pay attention to all the utterances, pauses and body language. They are the indicators of *something* that might be important and come to the light during the analysis process (Briggs, 1986, 46). The research questions and already existing studies inspired the themes for the question guide (see the example of the question guide in Appendix II). However, in avoiding hindering the depth and richness of responses I was not strictly following the question guide (Ayres, 2012, p. 811).

Sociologists Rosalind Edwards and Janet Holland (2013, pp. 65-6) write, that the saturation of the knowledge, when any of the participants are not bringing in new information, is the indicator for the necessary sample number. I stopped with 12 interviews when I felt that information became repetitive and no new topics or themes emerged. In addition, in studying the life-world experiences, the rather small sample number should not be seen a limitation.

I collected the data during January and February of 2017. Two interviews were conducted via Skype as it was impossible to meet in person and the interviewees were of value to the study because other respondents described them as successful freelancers. I needed to hear their stories. By talking via Skype, I lost the possibility to observe the environment and body language (Edwards, Holland 2013, p. 49), but I tried to compensate it by asking more details about the everyday routines. All the other interviews I conducted in places suggested by the interviewees. Some invited me to their homes and rooms.

3.1.2. Field diary - Being with

During the fieldwork, "attempting to situate oneself in the place the interviewees occupy in the social space" (Bourdieu, 1999, p. 613) I strived to be surrounded and affected by the same sounds and smells, because these facets are parts of their life-world too. All those small details as naked walls in the café, or a poster in the room, interviewees might take for granted, and thus, lose in the torrent of thoughts during the dialogue (Ritchie, 2014, p. 24). In addition, I have spent three days with two participants separately. One of them, Elliot, has also kindly agreed to keep a diary documenting his everyday activities for two weeks (February 16-30). I asked him to write down the time of his work and leisure activities; also people he was meeting and spending time with or feelings and thoughts about his day, places where he worked. We also agreed that he is in control of the diary and what he wants to tell me about his day (Plummer, 2001, pp. 51-2). All the interviewees were also asked to send pictures of the places they usually work, to have a glimpse of where the freelance work is taking place: on a train, at home or bed. I have received nine photos of the 'workplaces' and I got permission from the interviewees to use some photos in the thesis.

When writing field notes, I tried to record everything as detailed as possible. Nevertheless, fieldwork in this thesis is understood more of as an activity of being together or, as professors in ethnology and cultural studies Jonas Frykman and Nils Gilje (2003) name, 'being there' with the interviewees in a certain period of their day and life. Therefore, one should view the fieldwork as a complementary data, nothing less and nothing more. It cannot fall into the frames of a rich anthropological observation, as there was not enough of time to collect enough of material. Nevertheless, it helped me to see and understand things, which otherwise would have been invisible to me. The field diary notes will be interwoven in the analysis text. Excerpts from the field diary are used for inviting the reader into the different analysis parts.

3.2. Anonymity and ethical issues

All the interviews were conducted with interviewees consent. With signing the informed consent forms, interviewees know about the research focus and the possible forms and usage of the material. Their full anonymity is ensured, I changed their names the moment the data collection started. The recordings are kept in a safe environment, some were translated in their entirety and shared with my supervisor, others were kept in the original language and only the used quotes are translated.

3.3. Reflexivity

"You could have said before that you were studying journalism, I would have talked differently with you" – Kristen laughed, during our talk. This was a very important moment for me, to understand that I should present myself as a researcher and as a former journalist too. According to sociologists Howard S. Becker and Blanche Geer (1957, p. 29), it influences the way the interviewees see me: as an observer from the academia who might not share the same worldview, or as a former colleague, the one who knows specific expressions, inside jokes, the editors and gossip. Dr. Linda Finlay (1998 in Finlay, 2014), who is studying the implications of researcher's reflexivity, warns, I cannot "assume commonality" (p. 226) just because of having been working the same job. However, knowing the same dictionary and the slang helped during the analysis phase. I also had a possibility to come back to the interviewees, ask additional questions to clarify their ambiguous expressions. This was one of the ways to avoid misinterpretation of their experiences and feelings.

The power dynamic in the interviews was fluctuating, as professor of sociology Elizabeth A. Hoffmann (2007, p. 337) colloquially terms, it is similar to dancing. The power shifted between us every time when the question was asked and the answer provided. When interviewer gave the accounts of things that were very personal, extraordinary or controversial, then the power of producing information, influencing my knowledge belonged to them (Edwards, Holland, 2013, p. 78). It was impossible to avoid emotions or emotional reactions to the interviewees' stories. Their open, honest answers and willingness to share astounded me. I am reflexive and aware of limits of my possibilities to read and interpret respondents lived experiences (Finlay, 2014, p. 324) and that the produced knowledge is from my perspective and framed within my academic capacities.

I tried to be as authentic as possible while translating the quotes. I was concerned about reducing or exposing too much of a person, misinterpreting or doing injustice to their expressed feelings. Ruthellen Josselson (1996) who is analysing the ethical issues of exploring the narratives of human lives, writes, that it is an unavoidable "violation of an individual's life" (p. 62). This feeling was my companion during the whole writing process.

3.4. Thematic content analysis

I chose to follow the framework of the thematic analysis. This framework enables moving beyond the descriptions and digging deeper in the meanings expressed about freelance journalism in Lithuania by the respondents (Seale, 2012, p. 367). The process consists of three phases.

During the first phase, all the interviews were transcribed in detail, not leaving out anything that might have seemed as transgressed from the research questions or the overall topic (Schreier, 2013, p. 178). The act of transcribing was very handy because it helped to notice some emerging codes and categories. Already in the first phase, I started taking notes of things that seemed important and interesting. After the extensive and thorough reading of the interviews, I started with open coding. In order not to force pre-existing categories onto the data, the actual words or metaphors that the interviewees used were adopted as codes that resulted in line-by-line notes (Seale, 2012, p. 372). It should be mentioned, that the jokes, metaphors, emotional expressions and places of the interviews were all employed as valuable indicators for the thematic analysis.

The second phase started by mapping similar categories. Coming back to the interviews and field notes helped me to keep in line with the contextual information or notice something more. The interviews were very rich in data, thus moving from the descriptive to analytic look, I merged codes into the categories (Ritchie, 2014, p. 271). The categories were defined in a way that would be understood by anyone who would approach the data. During this phase, I was still actively taking notes. With more reading, each category submerged into three key themes covering certain topics. Consequently, information was digitalized and put into the table charts (shortened example of the coding is in Appendix III), so that it would be possible to compare the interviewees' examples and see differences and/or similarities (Seale, 2012, p. 383). Full quotes are used as indicators in the table charts in order not to lose the whole context of the expressed thought.

The third phase started with the analysis and the interpretation of the material. During the writing of the analysis, I was also coming back to and re-reading the transcribed interviews as well as the field diary in their entirety. I did it so that I would not take the quotes out of the context or misread some meanings (Given, 2008, p. 87). Themes are approached analytically aiming to look deeper into the meanings of the interviews.

It should be emphasised that in Lithuanian, the word 'newsroom' means not necessarily only a place where journalists work, but also it might be a referral to the journalism profession in general. Therefore, in this work, inspired by Bachelard (1964), I treat the newsroom as a building that stands in the land that I have described in the introduction. 'Freelance' is the additional room that is not yet built. I will continue to use spatial concepts throughout the analysis, hopefully in a creative way.

4

THE ANALYSIS

PART I

Journalism as a construction site

I write my field diary and it is 6 p.m. already; Matt sends a message saying he will be 30 minutes late. At least I have more time to observe the meeting place. The café is in the old part of the Vilnius. Therefore, the interior plays the game of blending old and new. Half of the café looks like many other modern places might. Big, round, brass lamps illuminate minimalistic black tables with slim chairs, pictures capturing people drinking and enjoying coffee hanging from the dark walled space. I sit in the other part separated with naked walls, which are part of the history of this city, the capital of Lithuania. It is a long, but not wide space where you have two choices: either to look through the window and examine people, buried under their scarves and coats or touch and examine the cracks in those pink and reddish bricks that once were most probably hidden under large amounts of cement and paint. Now it is part of the interior, part of the everyday life. I cannot escape writing about the time because it seems to be an important part of my and Matt's conversation; time for being a freelance journalist and time for living in Lithuania. Is it the right time?

Later, at the last moment, before I stop recording our interview, Matt says:

> Maybe I was too critical about freelancing, but I wanted to tell it the way it is because everything here is so… desperate. You cannot do anything about it. There is some cultural gap, it seems that you can create something, but there is…. Wild West here.

In the following chapter, the metaphor of a construction site symbolises what kind of problems interviewees see in current newsrooms and the journalism profession in Lithuania. There are piles of bricks, cement and scaffolding for changing and improving the journalism space. In the long run, these are the materials from which freelancers could build an additional room – the freelance room, a place only for them, where they could come, dream and create quality journalism (Bachelard, 1964, p. 226). Nothing is put together yet and everything can be easily changed and re-shaped. The

discussion moves further from only discussing problems within journalism space and touches upon other, broader and nationally framed issues.

The problems that need fixing

Throughout the dialogues, all the interviews one way or another started and ended in the broader discussions about the current time and the state of journalism. The interviewees are in the dialectic of the inside and outside the newsrooms and the journalism space (Bachelard, 1964, p. 212). To some extent, it is a privileged position, because only by being outside "the being tests consistencies" (Bachelard, 1964, p. 215). Thus, the interviewees acquire the possibility to step away from the newsroom frames and walls that would limit their sight and see a broader view of the problems and cracks of the site. Alice thinks that newsroom journalists sometimes forget what the essence of journalism is. According to her, "there is too much orientation towards money, clicks, lesser to quality". For Kristen, the journalism profession seems to be forgetting that journalists are people too, with their own preferences, feelings and attitudes:

> Newsroom work… you will most definitely have to step over your values, especially if you work in the news. For instance, you are told to go somewhere and report about something or someone and you will have to go and write. No one cares what you are thinking, would you vote for Trump or not. Objectivity… the most strived for thing in journalism… yeah, not really.

The media management in Denmark, where Scarlet was studying multimedia journalism, fascinates her. Compared with Denmark Scarlet thinks that journalism in Lithuania has merged too much with business:

> I am very scared about it. And I don't have anything against the advertisements, it is a fact that newsrooms won't survive without it and I know that they try to separate it from the content as much as it is possible. However, for the ordinary audience, everything seems the same. Then the news media website looks like I don't know... a porn site.

On the one hand, the interviewees' accounts are more objective and critical because of the position they hold. On the other hand, their individual stocks of knowledge, dreams and experiences (Schutz, 1974, p. 66) influence their understanding of professional journalism. Kristofer expresses

helplessness because he thinks that the journalism he dreamed of creating is no longer part of the current journalism profession:

> It is interesting, that long hard work of those powerful fathers of journalism, those professionals now vanishes little by little. Like a diminishing heartbeat. It transforms into speed and quick gossiping. Journalism becomes unnecessary. And you don't need some freelancer who would go somewhere, you just need a person who would sit at the computer, and just would collect all the information from the news agencies, not even do any research. Just provide clicks. Primitive.

Many professional challenges or problems that interviewees indicate are similar to those found in many newsroom studies: changing relationship with the audiences, click baiting, and increased market orientation (see the discussion on p. 14). The respondents are concerned that traditional journalistic practices such as fairness, ethical conduct, autonomy are 'like a diminishing heartbeat' in the current Lithuanian newsrooms. These all are the cracks in journalism space that interviewees try to shore up with their independent contributions. As Deuze (2007; 2008) has already noticed in his studies, journalists articulate professional challenges likening it to their understanding of core journalistic roles and responsibilities.

National journalism challenges

Bachelard (1964, p. 29) has beautifully referred to a city as an ocean navigating the individual boat with storms or dead stillness. Similarly, Lithuania is a land on which the freelancers and other journalists build and fix the journalism space. Sometimes the land is trembling, sometimes the holes, that were lazily fixed, reopen. Overall, the land is the foundation on which the life-world is being created and reciprocally experienced; for instance, learning the possibilities and limitations of the actions, gaining knowledge and creating the 'self' and the journalistic 'self' (Schutz, 1974; Berger, Luckman, 1967). Matt was both worried and sad when after returning from the Berlinale film festival he knew that the only movie he could have written about for Lithuanian audiences was 'T-2. Trainspotting'. He understands that the editors, not the audience, set this condition: "There is clearly cultural vacuum in Lithuania and journalism does not work with that. I think that many people sit and wait for something to happen. And I myself don't know how to solve this".

During the talks, some national aspects of problems in the journalism profession emerged. When some of the interviewees were talking they distinguished between general problems in the journalism profession and "in our" (origin. pas mus) or 'we', referring specifically to problems in the Lithuanian journalism space. For example, Alice is missing different techniques of storytelling that are already used in other countries as part of new journalistic practices: "in our (origin. pas mus) we still lack new journalism, multimedia journalism".

Luke and Elliot are dissatisfied that in many newsrooms, journalists maintain just certain roles: either a photographer or a writer, not both or more. According to Luke, this is the reason why in Lithuania there is still no culture of analytical and in-depth journalism (origin. letoji zurnalistika). Later, Alice adds more problems she notices: "What we really lack is stronger ethics, because some kind of taunting trend is emerging". Taunting and exalted unprofessional pundits according to the interviewees are prominent problems in the national journalism space. According to Alice, it is being celebrated and fostered rather than opposed in the society. Many interviewees are concerned about the lack of media literacy in the society and loss of empathy from journalists to the people. Additionally, that currently no institution monitors journalists' actions and professional conduct. Such institution, according to Luke, would strengthen the professionalism and the possibilities for journalists to freelance:

> In our [origin. pas mus] Lithuania there is a lack of institution that would monitor press and media in general. That would look at the content and photos if there are any hidden agendas or advertisements if everything is legally used. As one of the results, the newsrooms don't send journalists to other countries to do reports, because they can easily steal content from foreign news media.

According to some interviewees, the new media technologies are not being used in its full capacities, in the Lithuanian newsrooms. As a result, different styles and storytelling techniques are lacking in the journalism space, this is a critical problem, according to the respondents. They notice the absence of gonzo journalism, multimedia storytelling or content, written in a literature narrative style. The latter Kristen tries to promote with writing her own articles in this style. It seems that interviewees, who have collaborated with foreign media or just were familiar with newsroom practices and rules in other countries (for example Luke, Matt, Alice have collaborated with foreign news media), are aware that what had been possible in the journalism spaces in other countries is

not possible in Lithuania (Schutz, 1974, p. 95). Correspondingly, the more cracks they see, in the journalism space and newsrooms as well as in the country.

Various people have different journalistic values, hence view and understand ethical and professional practices differently. Thereupon, different people 'think' the nation from different perspectives and contrasting resources. This results in a gap between 'their' and 'our' understanding of the nation and spaces within the nation (Anderson, 2006, p. 6; Lefebvre, 1991a, p. 45). Due to specific historical circumstances of the Soviet occupation and communist regime, the differences between people who share the same land becomes more prominent (Tuzaitė, 2016). For some interviewees this seems to cause problems in the journalism space. Some of the interviewees express feeling that the older and 'their' generation understand journalism differently. Luke thinks it is problematic that some editors are the ones who worked in the Soviet regime era and still are shaping the journalism space today: "It feels that journalism would have remained "Soviet" if not the investments from Scandinavia, thank God for that". Frank says that the relatively unstable situation of cultural journalism in the country is due to the resistance of editors to become more up-to-date:

> During the Soviet era, they had the status, they received lots of money, therefore those cultural outlets in those days had huge financing, huge circulation. Many of those people cannot cope and transition to the new attitudes and management rules that are necessary wanting to maintain cultural journalism tradition. This melancholic nostalgia to Soviet times that they are expressing is not in line with my views.

Scholars who study the everyday life in the post-Soviet countries document the anger and blame the young generation puts onto this specific historical period, and consequently, explain a lot of ills of the society as the remnants of communist regime (Tuzaitė, 2016; Putinaitė, 2008). It is the same for the interviewees: memories and preconceptions about the Soviet history echo in their intimate home places, in the newsroom and journalism space. Notwithstanding, the Soviet occupation should not be articulated as the only causality of existing problems in journalism (Mierin, Cers, 2014, p. 1054). A deeper look into Lithuanian society and other social spheres would broaden the understanding of journalism and country. Regardless of all the existing problems, interviewees view the future positively. Some put high hopes for their own generation: young, educated, travelling, learning, and thus able to implement changes in Lithuania. Subsequently, Scarlet puts a lot of belief and responsibility on herself:

> Overall, it is quite incredible to be in Lithuania, because the country is so young and journalism is still immature. We can do something about it. Make some actual influence and change it, for real, of course, if we will continue working and doing what we are doing.

The newsroom as a symbol of the crisis in journalism and in the nation

In many interviews, the newsroom became a symbol of a place where all the problems that interviewees flag manifest and are further sustained. Despite positive changes such as the application of the investigative journalism (for now only one newsroom in Lithuania fosters investigative journalism practice) or growing usage of multimedia projects, interviewees still see stagnation and inactivity in the newsrooms and hence journalism space. In addition, lack of resources that are necessary for them and their journalism.

Usually, the interviewees describe themselves as journalists in comparison to journalists working in the newsrooms. The distinction of "I as a freelance journalist" and "they, working in the newsrooms" becomes more apparent when the respondents articulate that the newsroom is not the suitable stage for the roles they strive to perform. For example, Luke thinks that real journalists should not acquire those roles:

> A lot of photographers, who work in the newsrooms, they are like craftsmen. Alternatively, become like one. They go, take a photo, deliver it to the editor and that's it. However, photojournalism is not about that. It is about risks, acumen, curiosity, empathy, respect. You lose those aforementioned traits when you go and work according to some tasks, requirements from the newsroom and it changes when you become a freelancer.

This distinction needs emphasising because interviewees themselves try to explicate, that they are doing journalistic work that is slightly different in the writing style, themes and treatment of the sources. All of it seems possible outside the newsroom, because as Kristen says, "those who sit comfortably in the newsrooms don't have to do that, they don't care about it". Thus, employed newsroom journalists, according to the interviewees, lose the edge and critical view from 'the outside' while comfortably being in the safe, four-walled newsroom place.

Lack of a comfortable place in or outside the newsroom makes some of the interviewees feel lonely and in need of a community of the 'fellow-men' who would share similar views about journalism.

For the interviewees 'community' does not necessarily mean a physical place. The community is imagined, wherein the actual meeting is not the most significant aspect; the belief of sharing the same values, the same view on journalism is enough (Anderson, 2006, p. 6). The imagined freelance journalists' community would serve as a symbol that you are protected and that there are more 'fellow-men', thus you are not alone. For Kristofer belonging to an imagined professional journalists' community induces the feeling of responsibility to create quality journalism:

> Because if you know how to write without grammatical mistakes, ordinary people respect you and look at you as a normal journalist, but professionals see that you are full of shit. So if I ever want to do some quality journalism I only do for those professionals, they are the only ones who can judge me.

By being with people like themselves, freelancers naturally would be more stimulated by sharing similar values and goals. In addition, it could serve as a resource for developing and sustaining the journalistic identity. Additionally, they could feel the support to keep on pursuing different angles to the stories, creating articles that might not receive many clicks, but would open doors to the discussions about social problems and give voice to underrepresented ones. Some interviewees found ways to substitute this need, by being active on social media, engaging with former colleagues, sending the articles and photos to friends for the feedback, or creating an online chat group with other journalists who freelance or want to.

I would like to suggest that even though interviewees have not explicitly said it directly, from their used metaphors and examples, the newsroom emerges as a symbol of the problems within, not only journalism space, but also within the nation. Interviewees are not referring to any specific newsroom or any specific editor. Zelizer (2017) writes, "warning, labelling, evaluating and critiquing journalism and journalistic practice reflect populations and their individuals […] and the relevant historical time periods and geographical settings" (p. 11). In addition, taking into account that the values that interviewees see as accepted in the newsrooms mirror the values accepted in the society (Deuze, 2008; Dahlgren, 1996, p. 63), it could be that by speaking about the newsroom or journalism interviewees are also speaking about the nation. Some respondents, as for instance Luke, directly assert that the state of journalism in Lithuania is very influential in impeding the development both of the profession and of society. Elliot also sometimes refers to the Lithuania as one of the causalities of problems within the profession: "For me, empathetic relationships with

people are very important. That's why I create specific journalistic content, but this kind of journalism is not valued in Lithuania".

In other instances if the word "newsroom" or "journalism" would be changed to Lithuania or if the reader would think of the national context and societal values instead of a certain place, it would not make much difference in the meaning. For example, Scarlet says:

> When I worked in the newsroom as a photographer I had to go and take photos in concerts. I knew that there is like an unwritten rule that all photographers have to take photos of those people who are dressed differently or not 'high-fashion' so that the next day, people could open their computers, look, and laugh and mock those people. Then I understood that I don't want to be part of this.

Kristofer's comparison also says much more about the quality of work that Lithuanian public expects from the journalists. It could also be seen as an indicator of work conditions, not necessarily only in the journalism space:

> In the current newsroom you feel like the conditions untie your hands and let you do everything that you want, but what is not related to journalism, they don't care how you will write and what kind of quality content you provide, pensioners will read it anyways.

Lithuania as a land is heterogeneous, it provides interviewees with many possibilities create the kind of journalism they want, but at the same time, current media platforms and the slow adaptation of new journalistic practices and skills limit those possibilities. According to the interviewees, there is a lack of both novelties and appreciation of core traditional journalistic roles and responsibilities. Notwithstanding, the future of journalism seems brighter. However, like building an actual additional room, it requires time, investment and a very strong belief that it is worth creating.

Summary

In this chapter, interviewees share their thoughts about contemporary journalism, and about the life-world experience in contemporary Lithuania.

The most prominent problems in Lithuanian journalism are similar to those found in other journalism studies. The main problems relate to the betrayal of traditional journalistic ideals and adaptation of business-oriented management in the newsrooms. Some interviewees are concerned about fading journalistic practices as, for instance, being accountable and fair to the public, and at the same time educating the public, giving a platform for different views. The interviewees touch upon contemporary problems as well as the long existent cracks. It seems that interviewees think that the communist regime really influenced the path the profession is taking, and correspondingly roles and values some newsroom journalists appropriate.

For many interviewees the current practices in newsrooms are not acceptable therefore, they chose to be freelance journalists. In addition, what interviewees say about the newsroom journalists illuminates what kind of professional identities interviewees think are acquired in the newsroom, and what kind of values are fostered there (Frosh, 1991, p. 188). Despite a lot of critique to current trends in the profession, interviewees are more optimistic about their own post-Soviet generation and their power. The question remains, to what extent young people in Lithuania have the symbolic and actual power to implement changes within the profession.

PART II

The home

The home is a primary and the most intimate place of a human soul: It "is our corner of the world. […] it is our first universe, a real cosmos in every sense of the world" (Bachelard, 1964, p. 4). Home is not necessarily a physical entity, it can also be a "psychic state" (Bachelard, 1974, p. 72) and an intimate place where a person draws back in the need of calmness, security or goes to celebrate in the moment of happiness.

This chapter focuses on understanding the implications to the freelance journalists' experiences of working from home or public spaces. In addition, it indicates the various ramifications that influence the life-world, such as not having traditional employment status that also provides with a certain title in the society.

Visiting home offices

The apartments I have visited are described in more detail in my field diary; I use shortened descriptions for a better understanding to the reader of how the home offices look, and from what kind of spaces and places 'freelance' experience is created. Other 'offices' are presented in the pictures.

Stella in her yellow room

During the interview, Stella ensures that she is satisfied with working from home: "I am one of those people who can easily work from home, I don't have this anxiety or whatever. I can sit in my room for days and it doesn't affect me". She prefers the possibility, if, and, when she desires, to be able to drink a cup of coffee or do yoga. Alternatively, go and watch a movie in the middle of the day, which she admits does not happen very often, because she is usually in unease thinking that a new assignment might come at that exact moment. However, the possibility excites her.

She lives in a former student house in a small room. We go up in an old elevator to her floor. She unlocks and opens black doors. The minute I enter the room, warmth and sandal scent overwhelms me. All the parts, that are usually separate with walls: kitchen, bathroom, living room, bedroom in Stella's apartment are pretty much in the same space. Only the bathroom has brown doors.

Everything else had been seemingly thrown together, only Stella knows the clear lines that separate the bedroom from the living room or kitchen from the workspace. Her table stands in front of the window, from which you see another big, grey nine-storey building. There are a lot of candles, small cactuses and frog figurines on her windowsill.

On the left side of the room, there is a bed, covered with a fluffy green blanket, very soft and warm. Her room is yellow, with small flower prints randomly spread across the walls. A big, brown poster with words in white capital letters "WHO DOESN'T GIVE UP TAKES THE WORLD" is hanging next to her worktable. The personal nature of the poster and candles act as an antibody for the room, fighting off any attempts to completely transform the home environment to an office one. However, usually, she works from here.

She suggests I sit on her bed because she does not have an additional chair. I say that the bed is very comfortable. Stella warns me: "yeah, exactly, and when you do not have to get up for a specific hour in the morning, you really have to fight every morning not to remain in this comfortable bed". She excuses herself and sits at the table on the big black leather chair. It is her father's gift and maybe the only thing, which resembles a traditional work place. She makes herself comfortable in the chair that feels oversized in comparison to the cramped and confined room. Just the tip of her head stands above the large chair once she is seated. She opens her laptop and starts where she left off before we met for the interview. I wonder, maybe this act makes the apartment into the office.

Elliot's private room in a family apartment

Elliot is living with his family in the same room he did his homework and wrote his bachelor thesis. The apartment is situated in an old, brick building. We enter the flat, which is located on the eighth floor. The small entrance hall leads straight to the main living room that is his parent's room. Elliot rarely spends time there, his space, his leisure and sometimes 'suffering', as he says, place is his room. We go straight there.

When he opens the door to his room there is a noticeable difference to that of parents: less furnished more aesthetic. The walls are bright yellow with green patterns, parts of it glitter when the sunshine penetrates through the window. In the middle of the room, there is a worktable with a big computer screen (27 cols) and a stationary computer. This is one of the reasons, why he cannot go and work in cafés or other public places. "It is interesting, how much time it would take before someone calls

to the psychiatric ward if I would bring it to the café" –, Eliot laughs. The shelf that stands on the worktable is stacked with books about film history and writers he appreciates. Here he keeps everything that is important and inspires him and his work. The bottom section, filled with piles of old magazines, of which half have been read and half saved for when there will be 'more free time'. Now this shelf is like an extension of the table. Usually, he also tries to have some 'brain food' on the table or on the shelf. When the kitchen is so near it is easy to become fat, he explains. The bed stands right behind the table. It is very close, not even 2 meters between these two work and leisure spaces. He admits that it is very problematic, you feel the presence of the bed "breathing to your back".

He admits that sometimes he does not leave this place for five days straight. Naturally, my question is corresponding – How did you maintain your sanity?

> I was on the verge to lose it, - he laughs. I felt like in a movie, like in 'Inception' if you have seen that one. It feels like everyone is looking at you, you are an alien in their world. But I know, people might look at you, because it is normal and accepted, just when you are outside the world for such a long time, everything feels more intense and heightened.

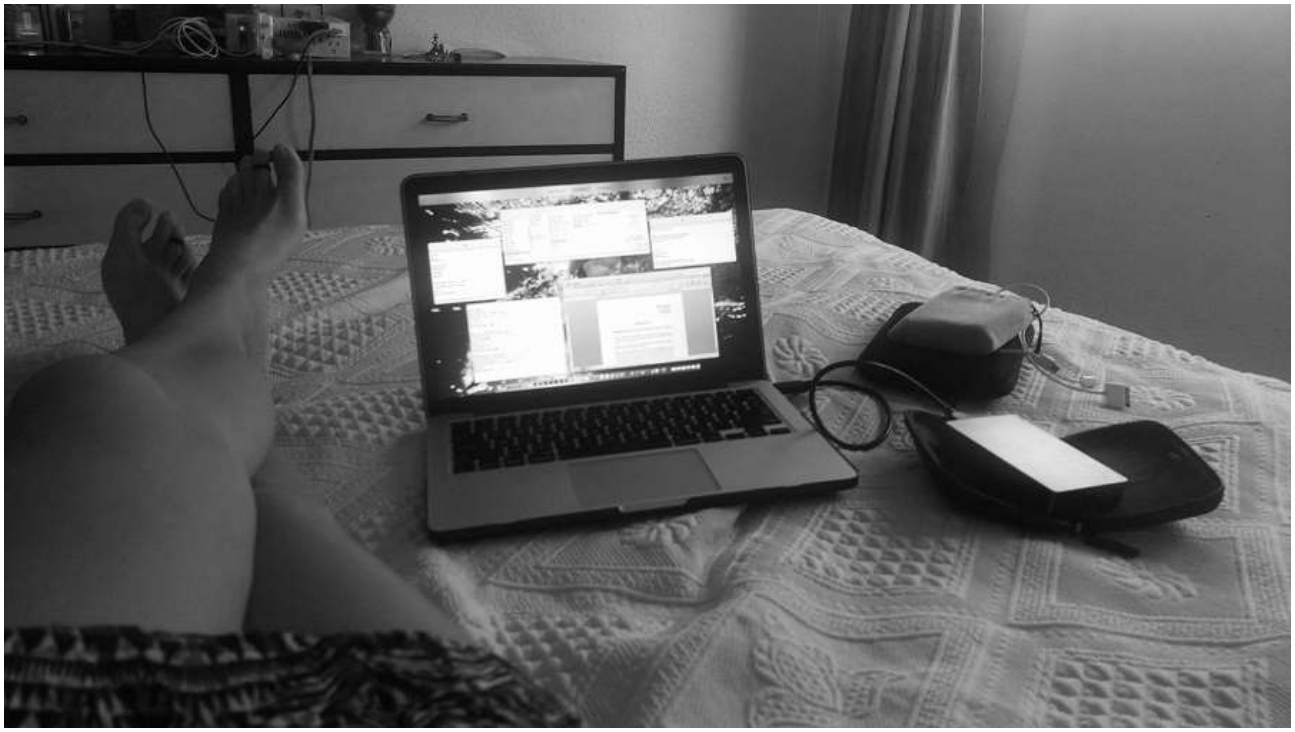
The window, which is on the left of the table, is one of the ways to escape these four walls. You need to stand in order to see some life outside. The panorama of the whole city opens up. This is so relaxing and creates a feeling of a different universe within this room and within the world.

Other spaces and places of work

Here are the photos of some of the other places interviewees work:

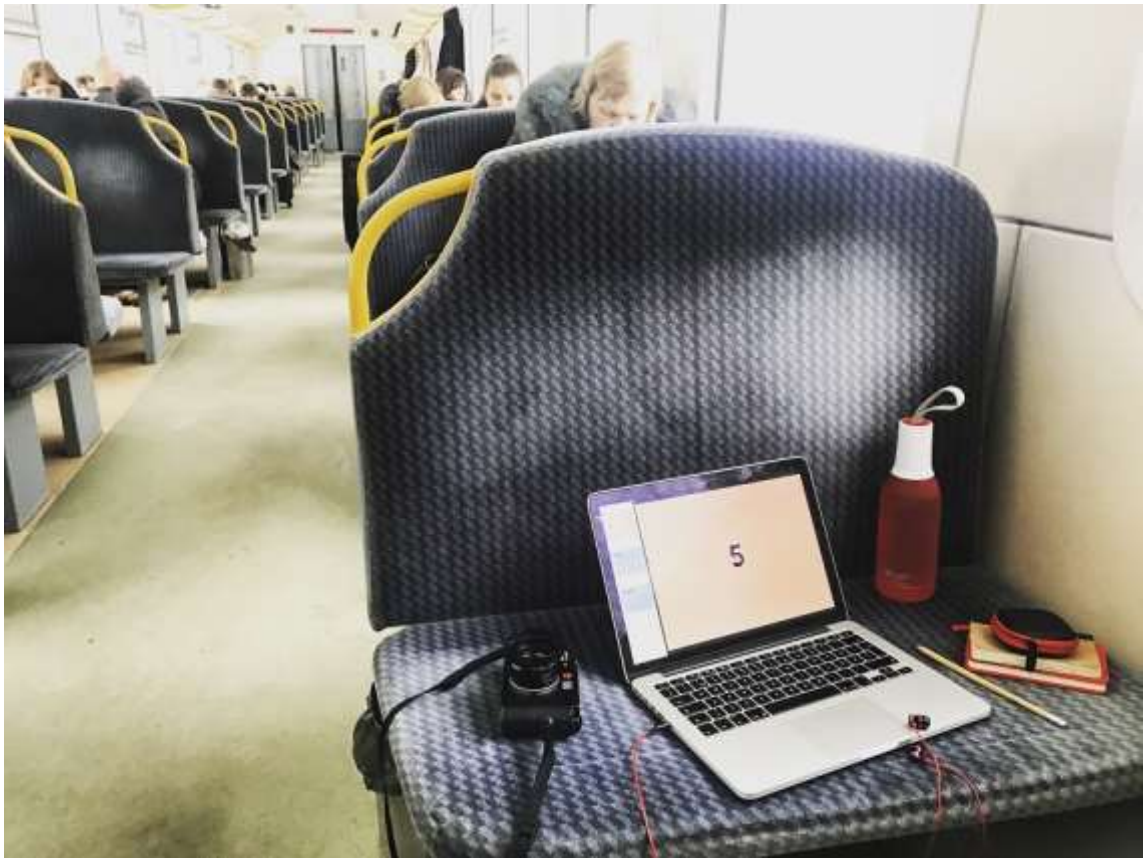
*Isabella's places of work (first three places are from her home, the one on the right bottom is in the newsroom she currently collaborates with).

* Frank's work places**,** home (left) and the library (right).



* Alice’s current workplace – a temporary stop while travelling across Argentina.

*Mimi’s room-work office situated in her parent’s home.



* Luke's usual workplace.

People work from home for various reasons and it is not necessarily a choice, sometimes it is necessary (Baines, 2002, p. 98). For example, Mimi does not like to work in her room. She prefers working in a library or a café. However, she lives further away from the city and commuting is too expensive. She has to learn to work in her room. In addition, not all the interviewees work from home all the time. Some try to change the places of work by working in the libraries, cafes or other public places. Isabella tries to work in different places within her home: in the studio, in the kitchen or in the living room. Transitioning makes it easier for her to feel flexible and dynamic. Alice sends the pictures from her current workplace – an apartment in Argentina. The place and the scenery would change the minute she decides where to go next.

The destruction of a home feeling

Work, leisure and private life make up a dialectical system, Lefebvre (1991, p. 40) wrote in 1958. Now, it is rather difficult to dissect the clear distinctions between leisure and work or private and public, drawing on the studies of work and life by sociologists Gregg (2011) and Hochschild (1997). According to Gregg (2011, p. 169), the new media technologies enable people to pretty

much work anywhere: cafes, libraries or at home bedrooms and this possibility makes the professional 'presence bleed' into personal lives of the workers. When the spheres of the private and public merge, sometimes it is difficult to pinpoint where the home, the intimate space starts and ends. Home, for a long time, was seen as a private place "in which the worker is able to be whole or complete, retaining some authenticity of self" (Taylor, 2015, p. 182). However, when the home, as Baines (2002) indicates, becomes some sort of an office, the dichotomy of private and the public subverts in a sense, that now to escape work-related thoughts rest and to withdraw some interviewees go to public places. Kristen, when it becomes too difficult to work at home goes to work in a café, and then after a while working back home becomes 'normal' again. Matt, for instance, finds it difficult to take a pause from thinking about work, when home or any public place reminds him of it. On a more general level, all the interviewees can work during any time of the day; they need just a good internet connection for searching stories or displaying already published works on social media, hence maintaining the online image and accessibility for the editors and audiences.

In addition, for some interviewees spending time for leisure or other activities induces feelings of guilt. Isabella, when she was working only from home[4], really tried to fight feeling like 'home' during the 'work hours':

> I have to work even though I do not have assignments. I still have to wake up and do something, so that the time would be productive. Of course, it was not as if I always spent that time for work and productively. Working from home is a specific type of work. Time to time you go and make a cup of tea, sandwich, you bring them to your table… but I tried as much as it was possible, maybe in frames of time, to sustain this work discipline.

Elliot too finds it difficult to work from home. Every additional activity that he does for himself, for example watching TV or reading a book feels like guilty activities because he should work. If he lays on his bed he sees the computer screen which reminds him of work, when he works it takes just one turn to see the bed which is inviting to rest. For him, work space is "uncomfortably fit into the physical and emotional space of the home" (Baines, 2002, p. 98). Working from home impedes Elliot's flexibility and ability to compete with other journalists, who can manage their time better and who are working in studios or newsrooms. He still tries to come up with a better way than working from home.

[4] Currently Isabella is working from both home and newsroom where she works as freelance journalists.

One of the reasons of dissatisfaction with one's productivity is that by working at home and on the freelance basis the interviewees lose the possibility of rewards such as raise in the salary or other additional benefits, promotion, praise of the colleagues or an editor. The latter are very important for a working person (Ertel, et al., 2005). Some interviewees create their own reward systems, for instance, working twice as much for taking one week off for holidays. For others, a reward is also a possibility to have a 'home' day at home. Elliot's diary shows that only when the task was submitted the time spent at home was awarded as a "day for procrastination", meaning that during this day the 'home-office' becomes 'home'.

For those interviewees who had secondary employments, part-time freelancers, working from home was not as problematic. For instance, Frank has his workspace in the library, thus is able to better separate work and home places. He tries to write articles after his work hours as the librarian, but if an idea comes, he cannot resist it. The majority of journalistic work he does at home or other public spaces during weekends or after work hours. Thus, for part-time freelancers who have other jobs, journalistic work take up the place of the time that could be spent for the leisure. Overall, for all the interviewees all the spaces could serve as work spaces and all time could be time for work. Many interviewees could not clearly distinguish what could now constitute the private and intimate space, where they could withdraw and 'recharge'.

Never ending time for work

One of the most prominent problems of working from home for the interviewees is to make distinctions between work and non-work time. Similarly, Gregg (2011) writes, "time becomes a resource easily wasted, as home space is assessed in terms of efficiency regimes and scheduling potential" (p.54). Their homes serve as offices and many interviewees try to maintain the institutional work time. For Luke it is one of the ways to manage his efficiency and avoid feeling tired and unsatisfied: "I try to work according to office hours, those eight hours are for a reason". Keeping with 8-hour workdays is a tactic that many interviewees use. However, for some, keeping up with it is difficult. The excerpts from Elliot's diary show how his work hours are fluctuating and obscure:

> Monday: I came back tired as hell, but my colleague sent me documentary related to a topic I am working on. So to "end myself" I watched it.

> Going to sleep 2.30 am.
>
> Tuesday: 6.50 a.m. wake up. This is more than painful. I go to meet my colleagues to talk about new projects.
>
> **
>
> Friday: Sleep 6 in the morning.
>
> Saturday: 10 a.m. I receive a call from a colleague, she is looking for me, because we have to finish the job. Orhhhh. I am still "offline" because of exhaustion. In these moments I feel like a rock star lucid from drugs, it is interesting for how long I can go on like this. At 12 p.m. I am already in the office, working...
>
> Sleep 2 a.m.
>
> Sunday: waking up at 11 a.m. there is still so much work waiting. The whole Sunday will be for working. I got to know that I still can submit my work on Monday evening, so it becomes a little bit easier and I can go to sleep being calmer.
>
> Sleep 1 a.m.
>
> Monday: I am so excited it is almost the end. Everything is almost finished; the other project is also going towards the end. Today will be easy, the day of procrastination and calmness, and my personal small victory ☺

It seems that the only time to stop working is the time for sleep, and even this activity is sometimes postponed in order to prepare for tomorrow's tasks or answer someone's e-mails and messages on the social media. Scholars, who analyse freelance work conditions, notice, that maintaining the online images and social networks are work routines that extend beyond conventional work hours (Gollmitzer, 2016; Cohen, 2015a). It might also relate to the fact that "people generally have the urge to spend more time on what they value most and on what they are most valued for" (Hochschild, 1997, p. 198). Still, when working from home Isabella feels unproductive, not working enough, especially, because there is no end result, such as closing the office doors which would mean that the time has come - 'it is enough for today':

> But the work was like… like imitating work, because you have no real assignments, so you just research topics, network and then that "working day" ends around 6 p.m. but you feel like you haven't done anything productive so you stay in that room, sit until 9 p.m., because you feel that you have to compensate that empty time.

All the interviewees who are working from home try to compensate 'that empty time' with more work, prolonging it into the late evenings. For instance, Matt would sometimes work until 5 a.m., and wake up around noon, which makes him feel guilty: "you think oh fuck, half of the day went

for nothing. For now, I haven't yet found this work and life balance". This prompts him to work longer again, to compensate and substitute for the time lost while sleeping. Lefebvre (1991) sees working as a "vicious circle" (p. 40), an activity that is done in order to 'earn' the leisure. However, the freelance occupation subverts that dichotomy. In some sense, the interviewees are working in order to get more work. They could not reach the state of thinking that it is already time for leisure. You cannot switch the light off in your office and think that you will do it tomorrow. Respondents try to compensate the time lost for working during the day by working during the night and this becomes the vicious circle of the freelance work.

Problems with 'others' while freelancing

The interviewees, freelancing and working from home or another unconventional work space, were susceptible to disbelief and questioning from 'other' people. It heightens the struggle to form and perform the identity of an employed person. When, during the interview, Kristen tries to mimic a smile she gets when she says that she is a freelance journalist, I shrug. It is so diminishing. Imagine the smile a child gets when her face is dark from melted chocolate and she says that she has not touched it. As if you were caught lying. Admit you do not work. Kristen further elaborates:

> I always have this attitude towards me that I always have time, I can always adjust to others, who really work. I think that they imagine that me saying 'I work' is more just to justify being home. But I have big amounts of work; I sit and work from an early morning to the late nights.

Scarlet's family members still think that freelancing for her is more of an "after school activity". These circumstances arise from the lack of information and a dialogue about the freelance work in the society. According to Luke, full-employment is still seen as favourable: "the only and the right way there are no other options"; and thus providing the title, especially in the eyes of the older generation.

Many of the perceived assessments from the 'others' come from the interviewees' preconceptions and fears based on their own knowledge and previous experiences, hence 'stock of knowledge' (Schutz, 1974, pp. 66; 256). Elliot says, "we sometimes joke that if earlier we could call people unemployed, now we call them freelancers because it sounds better". He treats the preconceptions, fostered by the weak social cues of freelance work, as a joke. Simultaneously, this is how he thinks

the majority of Lithuanians see him. The interviewees are very conscious about the existence of the 'others' and preconceptions about the freelance type of work'. Isabella puts her finger on the problem:

> But there was one instance when I was at an event and I was introduced to a person as a journalist. And he asked me, for which newsroom I work for and I said that I am a free bird [Lithuanian saying meaning: I have no employer, I work for myself] and at that moment I, myself, felt some sort of discomfort, because I understood that I am in some sense jobless, trying to catch some assignments. I think that it could have created some kind of distrust or that I am someone who is an insufficient person, who is unable to find full-time employment.

For Stella, freelancing is "a secret land", she is the only one in that land and only she knows what it feels like to be there. Her friends accept the job she has in the communication company, freelancing is for her, something secretive and personal. According to psychologist Stephen Frosh (1991, p. 107), when society and others do not mirror the way the person would like to be mirrored it emasculates the possibilities for growing the self-esteem and the desirable 'self'. Similarly, Mead (1934, p. 47) states that people have to get the positive response from the 'others' to whom they show the desirable 'self' in order to fully establish it. Thus, those who do not get the approval, they cannot consciously feel being fully 'self'. Likewise, people desiring to belong, be accepted follow the rules, and value system that they assume are socially accepted (Mead, 1934, p. 204). By not belonging to a conventional workplace as the newsroom, the interviewees do not possess the right symbols that would signal that they are working people to the 'others'. For instance, both Stella and Fiona express that it is much more difficult to show to 'others', and consequently feel themselves, that they are working as journalists while lacking simple, small details like official email accounts or a specific journalist ID that usually comes with the full-employment in a newsroom. Stella says that she feels like "a fraud". Fiona shares other implications:

> I always feel more like a 'handy' person, like a substitute who usually works during the times when other journalists cannot or do not want to do it. [...] I don't have any ID or e-mail, so when I call someone and say: "Hello, I am from 'this' TV station" and if the person *googles* you he won't find your name on the list next to other journalists.

Differently, Luke finds it more difficult to work alone, without colleagues who could give some feedback:

> You always carry slight depression within you, maybe not depression but the slight disappointment of yourself and your work. And you just have to learn to live with it, maybe

> create some instructions to evaluate yourself. It is interrelated with learning to plan: stories, time, everything. If you let everything go loose and just improvise with the flow…then strange sadness might become part of your life.

Additionally, being part of the work environment means working and sharing space with 'others', hence having colleagues and belonging to a certain community or work place. The latter is a critical element "for our sense of identity and how others judge our value, status and potential" (Gregg, 2011, p. 98). Social relations and feedback are essential for a person, who is working in the creative and responsible profession, like journalism, it ensures the professional growth and development (Baines, 2002, p. 98), but freelancers usually do not have colleagues. The latter condition makes some of the interviewees feel alone or finding it more difficult to perform 'work' routines. For instance, Isabella remembers how it was easier for her to work in the newsroom because she could compare her working 'tempo' with other colleagues and sometimes feel good about the article she wrote. Without colleagues, alone in her work studio, it became more difficult for Isabella to do the everyday work routines, such as pick up the phone and call someone.

Interviewees imagine that they have to possess certain symbols or reside in a certain place if they would really like to be seen as 'working' journalists, hence, employed. They cannot fulfil those expectations because usually, freelance means – being not tied to one place or an employer. In Elliot's case, awards are not proof enough that he is living the life the way he wants and working the way that suits him. His mother still questions him 'when are you going to choose the newsroom?' Additionally, Alice is a professional freelance journalist, her articles or photo stories are published in various local and international outlets, but still, she sometimes has to remind the 'others' that she is a working journalist, not a travelling amateur photographer.

Regardless of working from home, not being part of any specific newsroom or journalistic community, interviewees still identify as working people and journalists. However, the 'others' sometimes reject the way in which the interviewees see themselves. The latter circumstance derives from the gap between the interviewees performed identities and actual possibilities to form and perform strong identity of an employed person while working on a freelance basis in Lithuania.

Summary

This chapter illuminates the life-world experiences of freelance journalists who are working from home and/or do not have a stable place of work. The interviewees' stories highlight how the private and public is merging, the distinctions between work time and leisure time are blurring. To some extent, some of the respondents feel as if left without an intimate place to withdraw from work-related thoughts, when their rooms serve as spaces for work too. Additionally, public, leisure places as cafes are also yet another place for work. So with going from the home to the café, the respondents do not leave the feeling of work at the home-office, they bring it with them.

In addition, the analysis shows how the lack of knowledge about freelance work and tradition of working from home actually influence how interviewees create and experience their identities as working people. By working from home, the respondents are more prone to receive comments from friends, family members or acquaintances; these instances lead some interviewees to think that some members of the society do not see their work as equal to real work. However, none of the comments seems to dampen the passion for journalism.

PART III

The game room

I cross the street and there I see her – Fiona, standing right before the entrance to the building where the newsroom is situated. She stands too close to an electronic sensor and mechanical doors are constantly sliding close and open, close and open. First, I smile and then I wave to catch her attention. We go inside and there is a small space for those who are not part of this company. Other electronic doors are securing the entrance to the main facilities, where a long and vast corridor bifurcates into a maze of doors behind which are the newsroom, editor and leisure spaces. Fiona does not have a specific entrance card; therefore, we conduct the interview in the waiting hall. The entrance doors are very close and from time to time, I hear the sound of doors sliding and colliding. It is easy to distinguish who is a journalist and who is not, first, because they can enter and secondly, they have the special badges on their necks or hanging out of their pockets.

This episode, during my fieldwork, led me to think of the specific space where all the freelance struggles, motives, beliefs, dreams and fears in juxtaposition with specific freelance practices and everyday activities reside. It is something that is happening both inside and outside the journalism space.

This chapter is called the game room because interviewees themselves describe freelancing as a game: Elliot says, "you understand that these are the game rules, everything won't always be good or easy, but maybe there is no need for that." In the following chapter freelancing will be analysed employing Bourdieu's (1993; 2005) term of the game play. The 'freelance game' is both a rational understanding, which is both learned by having beforehand knowledge about the game and through playing it; as well as an irrational feeling, sense, and intuition of what the game rules are and how to play it (Bourdieu, 1998; Schutz, 1974, p. 25). The games are different. Only by being a freelance journalist can one know the game and the right rules. The aim of this chapter is to dissect what constitutes the 'freelance game' in Lithuania and how it shapes experiences and dreams of the life-world of freelance journalists.

The doors

From the interviewees' accounts, the doors and the editor emerge as the two important figures of the freelance game room. For Bachelard (1964) "door is an entire cosmos, it accumulates desires and temptations" (p. 222). The editor decides if the doors should be opened and the freelancer could step through the threshold into the newsroom building or not. The editor figure stands in between, or, rather, in some cases is securing the door, the passageway for interviewees to transition: from a journalist without an assignment to the freelance journalist with the assignment. As a result, the need to have a good relationship with the editor and know the editor's space – the newsroom – from the inside out is the most prominent rule of the game. Alice shares the techniques of communicating with the editors she learned during her career:

> You look for what they need, communicate, ask. Know not only thematic preferences but also their content and style. It is more about being on top of the things, able to navigate: what has been published, what style, what is usually the length of stories, what kind of photos do they use. Just communicate and monitor their activities.

There are more entrance requirements for freelance journalists. Every freelance journalist has a specific, individual cabinet within the freelance game room where the personal experiences and mastered game rules are stored (Bachelard, 1964, p. 78). All of these individual experiences are put into the drawers where the knowledge about the freelance game rules is kept (Bachelard, 1964, p. 78). Scarlet opens one of the drawers and tells me what kind of work she usually does:

> Why is this unique, interesting, why people need to read and hear about it. What makes this story different from others? […] You always have to keep the relationship going on, be always online, ask, send e-mails, and post on Facebook. If there are discussions, you have to engage, you always have to be accessible, and you always have to work. If you had a long distance relationship you will get what I am talking about [...] you can't ignore anything, you have to participate in all that life, because otherwise neither you will be interesting to someone, nor something will be interesting to you. And this is also work, even small things they need effort.

Elliot also notices, "what is not really nice is that we only have two big players and that's it. Moreover, they have the platforms we need. We, freelancers, can't overstep it". The small size of the journalism space really gives much of the power to the editors. This limits the spatial freedom for the interviewees to be able to move from the one newsroom to another, open one door or the

other. Likewise, respondents are bound by the rules created by the editors, the narrowness of the Lithuanian journalism space renders interviewees to reckon in the unwritten freelance game rules, such as compromises about low salary and loyalty to one outlet. According to Luke, mostly inexperienced freelancers repudiate these rules or do not know about them, consequently find it more difficult to successfully freelance and earn money. Thus, the doors to the freelance game room are closed for those who are not willing to negotiate or sometimes compromise.

Many of the Lithuanian freelance game rules consists of searching for exceptionality, work uniqueness, maintaining relationships with editors and other possible clients as well as being accessible and, most importantly, available for everything. Labour studies indicate that similar activities are part of various kinds of creative freelance work (Gollmitzer, 2016; Cohen, 2015a; Conor, Gill, Taylor, 2015). In addition, these activities can help the freelancers to become more successful in the freelance game, hence step into the newsroom building or, metaphorically, get the temporary entrance card. Consequently, "by entering the game, they [players] tacitly accept the constraints and the possibilities inherent in the game" (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 184). Thus, many of the interviewees take all these activities for granted as natural rules of the freelance game, similarly, as they take the traditional journalistic practices as part of their work.

Moving within the freelance game room

The more unique, interesting and reachable the interviewees are, thus the more possibilities are there to open the doors to the game room. Bourdieu (1993), who has extensively investigated playing the game, states that the habitus and the social capital are the most important traits in the game: "These trump cards determine not only the style of play but also success or failure in the game […]" (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 150). The habitus is "the feel for the game" (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 189), this means, understanding the game with its own specific rules. Habitus is related to having specific personality traits that easily lend themselves to freelance journalism: be communicative, friendly with editors, create a network of social relations. The symbolic capital is what the interviewees bring into the game and create through playing it (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 21). It consists of gained knowledge, journalistic status, 'name', and an established online and hence public image. Alice has the capacity to create trust and relationships with various people, therefore she is able to bring back stories about remote villages, vanishing crafts, something extraordinary and unattainable to every journalist. Luke was brave enough to go and tell the story from the moment protests in

Ukraine started. He stayed there longer than other Lithuanian journalists did; trying to capture what others did not have the time or did not want to. For Matt, playing the game is easier, because he is interested in non-mainstream music and there are not many journalists focusing on this specific area in Lithuania. He also has a big network of young people who help to reach young generation, as well as to make his work more visible and quickly spread in social media. Elliot is a multi-skilled journalist. When hiring him editors know that this journalist will be able to take photos, film, edit, write and report. These trump cards valorise the interviewees' work (Siapera, Iliadi, 2015, p. 78; Gregg, 2011, p. 131) or in another sense, add more capital to their game playing and hence strengthen their place in the game room.

The longer interviewees are playing the game and the more rules they know, the more symbolic capital they collect. Respectively, the less tension and sadness about freelancing they express. As Scarlet says, "with each new project or article it gets easier […] with each new work you learn and understand more". They are confident in knocking on more doors and wobbling the handles. The less experience – the more struggles, tensions and sadness the freelance game provokes for some of the respondents. It is a confining circle, but possible to destroy. Media scholars Rodney Benson and Erik Neveu (2005, p. 6) write that those who know the game and have strong positions in it are able, to some extent, change the game rules. Alice's and Luke's initiative to create an online platform for young, enthusiastic journalists, who want to learn the freelance craft could be seen as an attempt to try to change the conditions of the freelance game. From this small amount of interviews, it is possible to grasp that the stronger positions they have, the more they think about other freelancers. As Bauman (2000) puts it, "to people confident of their power to change things, 'progress' is an axiom. To people who feel that things fall out of their hands, the idea of progress would not occur and would be laughable if heard" (p. 132). Hence, the more successful, the more willing Alice and Luke are to share their knowledge and add to the creation of a freelance room in the journalism space.

The will to play the freelance game

Before she invites me to her home, I meet with Stella in a local café. In the middle of our conversation, she says:

> No. I think it is also defence, can you imagine that I work in the circumstances I talked before and I would sit and think about it. I would kill myself, - she laughs and continues – or maybe stop writing, but I do not want to. There is something that still pushes me to go, but I can't name it, maybe we will name it together during this talk.

Here, right in the kitsch café where the worlds of Renaissance, Ikea sale and Baroque are blended. In a big chair, covered in a black satin texture and chai latte in her hand, trying to put into words that which seem too big and overwhelming, Stella touches upon a different space within the game room. Bachelard (1964) in the "Poetics of space" spends a great deal in describing the importance of intimate, more secret places, where "you withdraw to yourself" (p. 136). Others cannot enter into this space. Hence, people themselves control these doors, should they open in or not. In this space the energy and *something* that still pushes Stella to be a freelancer rests. There are varieties of possible ways to name it, a dream, expectation, life goal, passion. It will be settled down with what Bourdieu (1993) calls *illusio*: "sustaining itself through the informed player's investment in the game" (p. 257). It is a personal and socially ingrained belief that the freelance game is worth your time and effort, that there is some result, an award. This belief is the driving force for the game, it also relates to pursuing "the state of affairs, the end, which the action has been undertaken to bring about" (Schutz, 1970, p. 126). Likewise, the decisions to freelance vary and relate to personal agendas. For example, Scarlet freelance because alongside studying, it is the perfect combination. Some motives are more precise, Stella and Fiona, explicitly states that they are freelancing in order to get into, or as Stella says, "be invited into", the newsroom. Other interviewees appreciate the ability to work in different places, thus feel freedom in a sense that you are not obliged to follow any newsroom rules and obey others.

In addition, for some interviewees, the *illusio* relates to the belief of a personal success and career achievement, forecasting that there is something more to strive for (Bourdieu, 1993, pp. 251-2; Born, Witteloostuijn, 2013, p. 31). Scarlet voices her personal belief:

> Freelancing 'bread' [Lithuanians say some occupations' bread referring to specific roles, practices needed for specific occupation] is inhumanly difficult and plus everything depends on the moment when you will do something or some project that will lift up your career, will push you to the surface or into another level. I think that until that, you must work really hard, and when eventually that jump happens, and then it becomes easier for you.

"The jump" as articulated by Scarlet, in Schutz (1974) life-world terms would be understood as the 'leap', "the exchange of one style of lived experience for another" (p. 24). For Scarlet that *exchange* is a specific moment in life, when after a particular event it would become easier for her to freelance, to change her position from being new, a beginner, to recognised and well-established freelancer. It relates to the hope and belief, to strengthen the symbolic capital and get a better position in the freelance game. The latter belief influence Elliot's decision taking up low paid projects. The more concrete motivations interviewees have, the more difficult it is to come across the challenges. However, the fewer expectations there is for the freelance game and the future, the easier it should be (Born, Witteloostuijn, 2013, p. 26), Frank tries to explain it in his words:

> You have no expectations, that you will strengthen the relationship and the end result will be this or that, for me, it is more a game, experiment, without any big expectations. […] If your goal is to be a freelancer and survive from it in Lithuania, then you can't be oriented into long-term projects and strategies.

Schutz (1970) suggests an interesting, but also challenging way for seeing the context of the actions, he calls it 'because' motives. The challenge lies on the assumption that if a person says that he did something 'because', according to Schutz (1970, p. 127) it does not mean that one is able to really understand or believe that it is the cause. If simplifying and understanding a 'because' moment as a context of actions or motives, it is possible to grasp something about freelance journalism labour conditions in Lithuania. Some interviewees, even though they do not explicitly say it, decided to become, or in some instances ended up as, freelancers *because* there are no places for them in the newsrooms as full-timers. For instance, Mimi wanted to write or work full-time in the magazine that focuses on the film industry:

> This is a magazine that you can't make it bigger, there are as many people as there can be, and they won't give up their places. And I can bet if you don't have a specific title or if you are not someone's, who works there, friend, your texts won't be there.

Considering she did not possess strong professional position and did not have the 'right' contacts she chose to freelance. She still faces difficulties trying to get her articles published in that specific magazine. Kristofer colloquially expresses about a similar 'because' moment:

> It is very difficult to work in journalism in Lithuania. I think there are established photojournalists who work in newsrooms for a very long time and their rotation is very slow. Now you can just come to a newsroom only when someone leaves and it rarely happens. Practically, you just can come in when someone retires or dies.

Luke wants to start the dialogue about the needed change in Lithuanian journalism: more quality, empathy and multimedia projects. The dissatisfaction with a current journalism state was the context for making the choice to become a freelancer. In addition, the interviewees' decisions are not solely conditional. They are also conscious and purposive. Some choose to freelance because this is a challenge that prompts creativity and real 'journalistic' experience. Alice explains:

> You forswear the security and full-time employment in one place so that you would have more possibilities to travel to various places, search for interesting stories that otherwise you wouldn't know exist. You lose but also win something.

By taking something away, usually stable conditions and security for the future, freelancing also provides with something that fosters interviewees keep on working and believing in their actions. Even though it is very challenging to freelance as a journalist for Mimi, she still concludes: "but… you asked me if I want to keep on freelancing, yes I do, but I think it will be very difficult". The 'difficult' is an insufficient challenge, for her, to impede the *illusio* for playing the 'freelance game'. From what interviewees talk about, the freelance circumstances seems to some extent both impede their goals and stimulate them. It satisfies the respondents' needs of development and winning the personal "small victories" as Elliot wrote in his diary after submitting the assignment.

Summary

The analysis in this chapter reveals that a lot of freelance work or 'freelance game' consists of symbolic and emotional labour: monitoring newsroom activities, maintaining and expanding social networks, searching for exceptionality in every assignment. All these activities make playing the freelance game easier and more successful. Consequently, the success in the freelance game depends on the acquired and fostered symbolic capital and the freelance and journalistic habitus. For instance, acquiring certain journalistic skills or having a 'good' eye for photographs. The more experience and the stronger the symbolic capital acquired, the easier it is to freelance. Thus, the life-world experiences are tied to acquired knowledge and ability to compromise with the game rules that might sometimes be adverse.

For now, only a few of the interviewees feel comfortable and having enough of the agency to start contributing to making freelance conditions better for future freelance journalists. However, a move towards challenging the adverse ‘freelance game’ rules in Lithuania seems to be happening.

Concluding reflections

Freelance journalists in Lithuania to some extent are really working in a secret land. Until this thesis, freelance journalists from Lithuania were excluded from journalism research samples. Additionally, dialogue about the state of this workforce is still lacking in the professional journalism union and community. That is why some of the interviewees feel very lonely, hence like left on their own in this secret land.

The respondents are working on a freelance basis; the majority of them are working from home. This style of work and living is rarely seen as equal to full-employment in the society. This is an influential aspect to the life-worlds for freelance journalists, because 'others' unknowingly question respondents' choices of work and make some of them feel misunderstood, sometimes even irritated. However, these emotions arise when we talk about the freelance part of their work. I am confident enough to conclude that the interviewees are satisfied working as journalists despite the challenges within the profession. They like to be part of knowledge production, meet various people, and explore social issues together with revealing misconduct in society. Journalism is their passion, their style of living and of course, sometimes, a source of disillusion.

Lithuanian freelance journalists' everyday experiences are not different from those documented by sociologists Gregg (2011) or Hochschild (1997) who are studying contemporary workers' everyday life. The interviewees are ambitious, dedicated, brave and have many dreams to make Lithuanian journalism and the nation, in general, feel more 'like home' for their generation. Nonetheless, these ambitions and dreams make the interviewees sometimes feel slightly overworked, tired and thus "a strange sadness might become part of your life", as says Luke. The respondents are constantly working. If they are actually not sitting and writing, then they are communicating, searching for new topics, registering in various journalistic workshops and contests. Moreover, some are most of the time 'online': sharing their articles or just showing off their professional skills by commenting other's articles. Similarly, as journalism studies indicate this is part of many journalistic practices today (Siapera, Iliadi, 2015). For the interviewees being online and accessible is unpaid part of their work, on the other hand, it pays off in the longer run, because the better public image they create, the more often they are hired and appreciated by the editors.

The analysis shows how blurring lines between work and home, between work time and leisure time, intersects with the respondents' everyday experiences. This study strengthens the statement

that home and work spaces are intertwining, additionally, work time and leisure time are also blending. Relying on Gregg (2011) and Hochschild's (1997) works, it seems that office 'presence bleeding' into the home environment is the trend that is applicable for all kinds of workers, regardless the employment status or country. The interviewees' accounts lead one to think that everything now can serve as a workspace and every time of the day could be time for work, especially with technologies enabling people to be reachable and to work 24 hours per day. The full-employment in journalism is scarce and it is difficult to fully support oneself from full-time freelance journalism in Lithuania. Striving to remain in the workspace pushes some of the respondents to prolong work hours and shorten the leisure hours. For now, the discussions for solving the workspace and worktime intersection into all areas of life is still at a moot point, hoping for the better work conditions and skills of life management for ambitious future generations (Gregg, 2011, p. 170; Hochschild, 1997, p. 259).

As I indicated in the literature review, in many freelance labour studies precariousness and temporality are named as main challenges and problems for people working on a freelance basis. Interestingly, for these interviewees precariousness of work conditions, even unfair treatment by the editors or 'others' feels like part of the everyday life, part of the 'freelance game'. As writings on late modernity indicate, precariousness is already embedded to the respondents understanding of freelance occupation (Bauman, 2000). It seems to be part of the respondents' life-world, that they already take for granted.

As I was arguing, freelance journalists actually brought interesting points to the discussion of challenges for journalism today. They are critical about the contemporary problems within the profession as well as the practices fostered in the newsrooms. It shows that the problems within journalism profession, according to the respondents, are caused by institutional shifts in the newsrooms, which consequently influence the journalistic conduct. Hence, some journalists, who only work by editorial requirements, are contributing to the ongoing decline of professionalism, according to the interviewees. By working outside the newsrooms, on a freelance basis, the respondents express that, this is one of the ways to do the kind of the journalism, that they want. Additionally, they strive for better professionalism and quality, which seems to be vanishing in the newsrooms. Notwithstanding, some interviewees want to work in the newsrooms and believe that they can be as good journalists there as they are good freelance journalists now.

The interviewees are concerned about the current state of journalism in Lithuania. It intertwines with their everyday experiences on many levels. For instance, not all newsrooms appreciate the content some respondents provide. Sometimes they receive answers that their work is not what Lithuanian audiences want. Consequently, some interviewees chose to freelance, because they are not satisfied with the quality of professionalism and content in many internet news media newsrooms. On a more general level, the respondents' everyday life is shaped by the state of journalism in Lithuania, because every day they try to shore up perceived problems with their own contributions. Drawing from the interview material it seems that stillness, refusal to accept new trends and lack of dialogue about professional journalism in the society shape the journalism 'crisis' in Lithuania. Contradictory to the many debates in the journalism studies (for example, see the discussion in Hanusch, Hanitzsch, 2017; Alexander, Breese, Luengo, 2016), these interviewees positively value the changes brought by digitalization of the newsrooms. According to the respondents, it opens more possibilities to enhance journalistic practices. The latter is an optimistic act, especially in Lithuania, where, they feel that journalism has not yet reached the full stage of its potential. Thus, the analysis shows how the different workforce can articulate the professional crisis differently.

The concept of the life-world and the more holistic approach to journalists and journalistic practices helped me to see that the newsroom for the interviewees is not only the place of work; it is also a symbol of the nation. It was not my primary aim to study Lithuania. However, the analysis shows how influential the economic, political and cultural climate in Lithuania is to the interviewees' experiences of their life-world, hence being the citizens of Lithuania and journalists. It is not news that journalism is created by the people and as influential journalism scholars Deuze and Witschge (2017) and Zelizer (2017) highlight, journalists everyday experiences shape the content journalists produce. On a more general level, it also influences how journalists understand and experience the current shifts within the profession and newsrooms, or outside of them. The discussions about contemporary journalism should not only revolve around institutional changes. Journalism as labour is influenced by changing labour conditions: prolonged working hours, temporal assignments and low salaries, these traits to some extent influence the profession too. Thus, the thesis supports the claim that Deuze and Witschge (2017) make: "understanding journalism means to appreciate journalists' personal drive beyond the institutional protections and privileges of the profession" (p. 12).

Independent Lithuania is the same age as I am. The interviewees are also in the same age, some a few years older. As myself, Lithuania is still metaphorically maturing, searching, making mistakes and learning from them. The cultural, political and economic climate is changing rapidly in this country. Lithuania is more open, the young generation has more possibilities to travel, learn and grow professionally and personally. The unemployment rates in this country are decreasing and the economy is growing. Notwithstanding, drawing on the respondents' accounts, it seems, sometimes Lithuania cannot keep up with their growth and correspondingly growing needs for better work conditions and better quality in journalism. Nevertheless, the interviewees have actual possibilities to change and influence the journalism space and create the freelance room for the future generations.

Suggestions for future studies

It would be of value to look deeper into the contexts within which journalists work for the future studies. The analysis of the life-world hence the everyday experiences outside the newsrooms indicate personal but also problems at the societal level. Likewise, moving further from focusing on the precariousness and delving into more freelance labour details can also reveal more of existing challenges in contemporary societies. This study to some extent shows that the results of the many Anglo-Saxon journalism studies cannot be easily transferable to all countries. The conditions are different in many ways. To study journalism culture, researchers have to, with an open and unprejudiced mind, study journalism culture as a part of wider cultural aspects, such as a nation's history. This could be attainable with a holistic approach.

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Appendices

Appendix I

Interviewees
* (names are changed)

Alice, 30**,** has a degree in journalism and master in multimedia journalism. She is a full-time freelancer, collaborates with various international and Lithuanian outlets. Interview conducted via Skype 2017 February 15.

Elliot, 25**,** studied journalism; also is thinking to continue his master studies in political science and media. He is now full-time freelancer as a multimedia journalist. Interview conducted 2017 February 6. Spent three days as part of the fieldwork from 2017 February 6 to February 9.

Fiona, 26, has a degree in journalism. She is trying to freelance in TV shows, especially in the news. At the time of the study was searching for another type of full-employment. Interview conducted February 2017 February 3.

Frank, 26, has a degree in journalism, pursuing masters in philosophy. He is a freelance journalist and part-time librarian. He specialises in cultural journalism but also is interested in writing about technologies. Interview conducted 2017 February 10.

Isabella, 28, is a full-time freelancer who is currently collaborating with a newspaper she has worked as full-timer before, and a TV show. She has a bachelor degree in journalism and has been working as a journalist for almost 7 years. Interview conducted 2017 February 8.

Kristen, 27, freelances as a journalist, but now as she says herself, it is more 'off' and 'on' due to the problematic conditions. She has a bachelor degree in journalism. Started freelancing during her studies, usually freelanced and had part-time side jobs as translator or copywriter. During the time of the study, she worked as a translator and freelanced as a journalist. Interview conducted 2017 February 5.

Kristofer, 25, was studying journalism but did not finish it. Now is working as a freelancer photojournalist in a local town's newspaper. Interview conducted 2017 February 2.

Luke, 32**,** has a degree in art history, has worked as a photojournalist in newsrooms and news agencies. Since the beginning of 2014 became a full-time freelance photojournalist. He collaborates

with both Lithuanian and international news media. He was named as a ‘star’ of freelancing by some of the interviewees. Interview conducted via Skype, 2017 February 16.

Matt, 27**,** has a bachelor degree in journalism. Now he is a full-time freelancer, working with newspapers, magazines, online news media and radio. Interview conducted 2017 February 15.

Mimi, 26, studies master in journalism. She is taking her first steps as a freelance journalist. Interview conducted 2017 February 4.

Stella, 23, has a degree in journalism, is also thinking about pursuing a masters degree in political sciences. She works as communication manager’s assistant in communication company and freelances as a journalist. Interview conducted 2017 February 13. Spent three days as part of fieldwork from 2017 February 13 to February 16.

Scarlet, 25, has a degree in journalism and continues to study master in multimedia journalism. After finishing bachelor studies, she has been working in newsrooms and photo agencies as a photojournalist. Freelances since 2014 and thinks of herself as taking first steps as freelancer and professional journalist. Interview conducted 2017 February 7.

Appendix II

Themes for the interview

Opening question:

Could you please tell me a little bit about your professional background?

/If the person worked in the newsroom/:

Could you tell me a little bit about it?

What are the experiences of it?

Motivations and reasons for becoming a freelancer:

How did your journey as a freelancer start?

Knowledge and skills

What kind of knowledge about freelancing did you have?

After having some experience, how would you describe a freelance journalistic work to me?

From your experience, what kind of skills a person should have if they want to be a freelance journalist in Lithuania?

If the journalist also has a contract or partnership agreement with news media:

What does this contract mean to you?

Do you freelance in one place?

How do you feel freelancing in this newsroom/media organisation?

Freelance routines

Could you please describe me how your everyday routine looks like?

How do you approach the media organisation?

How do you feel selling your work?

Have you encountered any illicit or adverse behavior?

Is there any union or organisation that could help you if there would be any problems or mistreatment?

How do you make yourself sure that what you write will be printed?

Content, professional roles:

What are the topics you are interested in?

How would you describe yourself as a journalist?

To your mind, what are the most prominent roles of journalists in Lithuania?

Everyday and work:

How do you feel working from home?

Do you have any special routines?

What did you get to know about freelancing, what you did not know beforehand?

Have you ever felt in any way different as a journalist from your colleagues who work in newsrooms?

What does it take to be a full-time freelance journalist in Lithuania?

To your mind, how is the environment in Lithuania for freelance journalists?

Future and summary:

What are your plans for the future as a journalist?

Do you ever plan on working in the newsroom?

Closing questions and contextual information:

What do you think about the current situation of journalism in Lithuania?

Where do you see yourself and journalism in for example five years?

Would you like to add something?

Thank you for your time

Appendix III

Thematic coding examples

Theme I “Journalism challenges”

Interviewee	**The problems in the newsrooms (their journalism)**	**The void of professional journalism (my journalism)**	**National problems in journalism**	**Problem causalities**
Alice	Turi pateisint tą **turinį**, kur turi būti tikras, kad surinktum kažkokių klickų, turi **padaryti viską greitai,** staigiai. Man tai tiesiog netinka.	Tai yra orientacija į pinigus, clickus, **mažiau į kažkokius svarbius dalykus.**	Dar **pas mus** ta kažkokia... kaip čia pasakyti, mūsų apžvalgininkai ar kas įvardinti, visokie, kur rašo komentarus-straipsnius, kur nežinau ar to reikia ir ar **nereikėtų kažkur kitur akcentų delioti ir į kitą dalyką orientuotis.**	Na bet jie sako, kad žmonės žiūri, dėl to jie rodo, bet **ar nereikia tosmkažkokios prisiimti žiniasklaidai ir edukatorio rolės**, ką mes pvz darom su savo projektais.
Kristen	Tas redakcinis darbas... vis tiek tu **turi perlipti savo vertybes,** jeigu tu priklausai aktualijų skilčiai pvz na tai **tau lieps eit** kažką rašyt ir tu turėsi rašyt ir **niekam neįdomu, ką tu galvoji** ir ar tu balsuotum už trumpą ar ne.	Na man ta ideologija labai svarbu yra ir aš žinau, **kad yra tų dalykų, kurių vadovaudamasi tuo niekada neperžengsiu**. Tapatybės atskleidimo, baigiant mano ir užsakomųjų straipsnių santykį.	Man taip norisi, bet amerikiečiai vadina literatūrinę žurnalistiką, **man labai patinka būtent jos gija ir norėčiau, kad jos pas mus Lietuvoje daugiau būtų.**	**Pas mus nėra informacinio raštingumo.** Gyvenam tokiam amžiui, kur reikalingas jis būtų net mokykloj. Ne tik darbuose, kur žmonės valstybiniuose sektoriuose, visur jis yra reikalingas, nes informacijos yra tiek daug... **ir su ja labai sunku atskirti kur yra tikros naujienos, nuo ištęstų naujienų...**

Theme II: “Being a freelancer”

Interviewee	**I as freelancer in the eyes of ‘others’**	**Insufficiency**	**Working from home**
Luke	Iš pradžių, kai niekas **nenorėjo mekėti pinigų.** Nepasitikėdavo, **nepaisant to, kad mane pažinojo.**	neturim gal Lietuvos spaudos fotografų ir LŽS nėra sudarę **galimybių būti laisvais ir nepriklausomais.** Sakykim, šiai dienai būti laisvu ir nepriklausomu tai lygu būti bedarbiu tiesiog. Neapsidraudęs tu, už **tavo teises niekas nekovoja.**	Tos vidinės disciplinos, aišku tu tai gali pats po metų laiko labai greitai suprasti, **kodėl tu esi pavargęs ir kodėl tu neproduktyvus,** kad laiko neplanuoji. Tas dalykas labai svarbus, pasidaryti, nors tu **neini į ofisą, bet pasidaryti tokias ofiso valandas, neveltui yra tos aštuonios valandos, aš stengiuosi jų laikytis.**
Fiona	Bet neturėjom jokio pažymėjimo, kad mes čia esame žurnalistai iš tos laidos ir tada jeigu eini kalbinti žmogaus arba vizitinės net neturi, nieko negali **parodyti arba įrodyti, kad tu esi žurnalistas**.	Nes kai aš tuo metu nesijaučiau, galvojau, **kad nieko nemoku ir nieko nesugebu**, nes jautiesi kaip pagalbinis žmogus.	**Mane iškviesdavo kada norėdavo**. Galėdavo **paskambinti ryte** ir pasakyti ar gali šiandien pirmą valandą atvažiuot. Arba iš **vakaro**, kad kažką padaryčiau ryte.

Theme III “The freelance game”

Interviewee	**Game Rules**	**Playing the game**
Kristofer	Jeigu tu **palakai geresnius santykius** su viena redakcija, tada gali su jais gali pradėti pagalvoti kažką, bet vis tiek mano žiniom bus labai didelis atvejis, kad tai bus valdiškas projektas per kažkur.	Mano gal siekiamybė būtų būt, daryt savo long **read‘us, foto istorijas, dar kažką part-time**, o pinigus užsikalt fotkinant komerciškai kažką.
Matt	Nėra taip, kad padarau laidą ir kad visi ją iš karto perklauso. **Turiu dalintis, siųsti kažkokiem žmonėm, FB grupėm, realiai turi daug papildomo darbo**, už kurį tau nemoka, bet tu jį darai tam, kad išlaikytum savo poziciją	Aš turiu tam tikrą... mano noras yra kažkaip, kad ta scena judėtų ir manau **mano kaip žurnalisto indėlis turėtų būti parodyti tam tikras kryptis, kurios manau gali būti teisingos**, o kodėl jos gali būti teisingos, nežinau...

Appendix IV

Consent Form

Lund University

Department of Communication and Media

Informed Consent Form

Researcher: Agnė Raščiūtė

I am a master's student of Media and Communication studies at Lund University, Sweden.

For the master thesis project where I focus on studying the circumstances within which freelance journalists work in Lithuania, I am conducting semi-structured interviews, but your knowledge is the essence of it.

By signing this form you agree to participating in the interview and to being recorded. Anonymity will be ensured during the entire process, interview record might only be shared with thesis supervisor, and some interview excerpts will be translated and included in the thesis body as examples. Anonymised data from the interviews, fieldwork and the diary will be used just for the thesis research, nevertheless if needed they might be used for thesis presentation in seminars and/or be published.

Results and analysis of the research can be shared with you in the case of interest. You are free to contact me for additional information: agne.rasciute@gmail.com

Thank you for your time.

Date and Signature _____